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BI-CENTENARY OF METHODISM OVERSEAS

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Editorial Comments

TWO HUNDRED YEARS OF METHODISM OVERSEAS

HOW has Christianity spread from one place to another? In part, it has done so through the planned missionary work of men and women who have deliberately given their lives to the propagation of the Faith. But that is far from being the whole of the story. An equally important part concerns the way in which it has spread through the lives and words of Christians who were never set apart for such work, but who, because they lived with Christ, could not help but bring Him to those among whom they moved. They were possessed by divine power and they could not but use it; they had heard good news and they could not but tell it. 'I could not hold my tongue,' said one of them, 'from speaking of the things of Christ.'

The earliest missionary work of the Christian Church was not planned. If we think of the day of Pentecost as the Church's birthday, we have to say that its missionary activity broke out as soon as it was born, and that the congregation consisted of men of all nations—'Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, in Judaea and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, in Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt and the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and sojourners from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians.' It is true that the preacher on that occasion was one of the apostles, one of those whom Jesus had called that they might be 'sent out', but there was no planning (that is to say, no human planning) about it. That day's work did not end there; the 3,000 who were baptized in due course went home, and although they were not apostles, they were missionaries and talked about what they had come to know.

Once the preaching had begun, it continued, and before long there was persecution. That scattered the infant Church, and its members fled. The result, however, was not a lessening of its influence but an enlargement of it, for wherever they fled they preached Jesus. The result was that before long men and women were being baptized in Samaria, and a Church was formed at Antioch. There were no apostles amongst those who did this work, for we are specifically told that the apostles remained in Jerusalem. It is true that Peter and John (the same John who not very long before had wanted to call down fire from heaven upon the villages of Samaria) went to Samaria later in order to confirm the work which had been done, but they were not among the pioneers. It is true also that some of these early missionaries were officials in the Church, for they included the seven deacons, but most of them were ordinary members of the Jerusalem congregation. It was not their appointed task to be preachers, but they nevertheless 'went about preaching the word'.

Ordinary Church members were responsible for some of the most important missionary work that was done. In a very short time Damascus became known as a Christian centre, and it was because of this that Saul of Tarsus thought it necessary to go there as a persecutor. Who it was that started the Damascus Church we do not know, and how Ananias became a Christian there we have no idea, but it seems clear that these things were not due to the work of the apostles.

Eventually St Paul became the missionary figure in chief, but his work, tremendous as it was, was only one part of the total missionary activity of the Church. Most of his work was, of course, a breaking of new ground, but not all of it. The Churches he wrote to in Laodicea and Colossae were not founded by himself, and the Church in Rome was already large and well established before he arrived there. Nor can we credit any other apostle with the founding of the Roman Church. The story of Peter's early visit to Rome is legendary, but even that assumes that there were Christians in Rome long before he arrived.

What must have happened was that people like Aquila and Priscilla, travelling about the world on business, spoke of Christ wherever they went, and made converts, and gathered them together in little Churches that met in their homes.

As the years wore on, the same kind of thing continued to happen. When, about the year 264, marauding Goths stole some Christian slaves from Cappadocia and carried them over the Bosphorus, the result was that the slaves 'brought over large numbers to the true faith'. 'Of the number of these captives', says Philostorgius, in his *Ecclesiastical History*, 'were the ancestors of Ulfilas', and Ulfilas became a missionary, a bishop, and a civilizer of the Goths.

So it went on down the centuries. One can see it continuing to happen in the days of early Methodism. The faith spread through the systematic efforts of Wesley and his preachers, but every Methodist was also in some sort a missionary, and wherever he was he began to gather in others. An old woman in Birstal went to the house of a Mr Moon to card his sheep doddings and to spin them into linsey-wolsey yarn, and because the old woman was a Methodist, the result was the conversion of Mrs Moon, whose Christian life became one of great influence. Stories like this are innumerable, for it was the kind of thing that was happening all over the country all the time.

The process still goes on, but the particular example of it with which we are especially concerned at this time is connected with the spread of Methodism overseas two hundred years ago. That event came about in March 1760, not through a missionary society (the Methodist Missionary Society did not come into existence until a little more than a quarter of a century later), and not as a result of deliberate planning, and not through officially appointed representatives of the Church, but because a planter in Antigua had been converted by Wesley during a visit to England, and on his return began to preach to his slaves. In the following pages the story of what happened is told, some of the results are recorded, and some of the problems now facing the Church in the West Indies are set out. The event commemorated in them is a Methodist one, but the articles are of more than merely Methodist significance; they record part of the history of the Universal Church, provide an example of one of the ways in which God goes about His purpose of saving the world, and show something of the needs of mankind which only the Christian Gospel can adequately fulfil.

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TWO HUNDRED YEARS OF METHODISM OVERSEAS

Cyril J. Davey

THE BI-CENTENARY of the beginning of Methodism Overseas takes us back not to a plan or an agreed constitution, though those things came later, but a man with a warmed heart. In October 1760 Nathaniel Gilbert, planter and member of the House of Assembly in Antigua, who had been converted by reading a pamphlet of John Wesley's, began preaching to his Negro slaves. The two centuries which followed this event may be divided into fifty years when, against opposition and indifference, the idea of 'missions' was established; a century of advance and recession but, generally speaking, of immense achievement; and, finally, a half-century in which the idea of 'mission' has given way to the fact of the Church. Rough and ready though they are, these divisions will be matched in all the Protestant denominations. Indeed, the progress is that of the Christian Church itself, in which 'foreign' missions have constantly been opposed by the 'realists' and have, equally often, brought a new wave of spiritual vigour into the 'home Church'.

The pioneer exponent of overseas missions in Methodism was Thomas Coke, an Anglican clergyman of wide vision and exuberant enthusiasm who joined the Methodists towards the end of Wesley's life. In 1784 he published a *Plan of the Society for the Establishment of Missions amongst the Heathen*. Two years later he issued a second pamphlet, *An Address to the Pious and Benevolent*. In the first, which slightly ante-dated Carey's published missionary appeal, he included the highlands and islands of Scotland and Ireland! The second he addressed not only to Methodists, but to all who cared to subscribe. Both aroused more controversy than support. Wesley himself was sharply critical of Coke's intemperate zeal, especially as he never allowed anything to be published in or about Methodism without his authority and Coke had issued his financial appeal entirely without consultation! Wesley was a practical man whose habit was often one of expediency. He was led by circumstances and the Spirit of God into his many deviations from current ecclesiastical ways. On principle, he would oppose Coke's scheme for an 'overseas mission' because he did not believe the time was ripe for it. Methodism, in a familiar phrase, had too much to do at home. On the other hand, if something happened to turn the dream into practical politics he would deal with the new situation.

Something *did* happen. On Christmas morning, 1786, the year in which he had published his *Address*, Coke landed at the end of a terrible and frightening voyage. Setting off for America, the ship on which he and three other preachers were travelling was blown off course for three months. Battered and hardly seaworthy, it sought refuge in the harbour of St John, in the West Indian island of Antigua. To Coke and, later, to Wesley, it seemed as if Providence had acted. Antigua was the island where Gilbert had begun preaching fifteen years earlier. His work, after his death, had been re-started by a Government shipwright, John Baxter, and Coke met Baxter that morning on the way to church. The clergyman preached instead—to 1,000 Negro slaves. He spent three months in

the islands, left his three preachers there to continue the work, and in 1787 thrilled the Conference with the story of foreign missions already begun. In the four years before his death, Wesley gave considerable support to the contention that since the West Indies found themselves on the stations of the Conference, as it were, they must be supplied with preachers and the work extended.

It took another thirty years for Methodism to accept the implications of the West Indian situation. Coke was accused, not always without justice, of ambition, and he certainly muddled the missionary accounts, even though he poured his own fortune and that of his two wives into the West Indian work. The opposition to the missionary scheme, however, had a more practical basis. Methodism, once a widely scattered mass of 'societies' owing deference to Wesley, had on his death to consolidate itself as a Church. The emergence of apparently 'rebellious' groups, leading to the establishment of secessions such as the Methodist New Connexion, the Bible Christians and the Primitive Methodists, made consolidation seem more urgent.

In 1813, however, Coke brought the Conference, meeting in Liverpool, to its knees. Now an old man, he offered his remaining fortune, £6,000, to establish a mission to the East if the Conference would send another half-dozen preachers with him. Deeply moved, and by this time greatly honouring the man they had once suspected of ambition, they could not but agree. On the last day of the year the missionaries set sail from Portsmouth. Four months later, as he prayed in his cabin, Coke died while the East-Indiaman sailed across the Indian Ocean.

Thomas Coke's death stirred Methodism as his life had never done. By 1816 there were 111 missionaries overseas, and within ten years of his death Methodism was at work in West and South Africa, in Ceylon, India and the West Indies, and in Australia, New Zealand and the South Sea Islands. The first period was over and the century of expansion had begun.

To find the explanation of this incredible surge of missionary zeal we must include factors both within and beyond Methodism. Since it was matched in much of Protestantism, the reason must lie, in part, in the situation of Britain itself—a situation full of paradox. Soon after Coke's landing in Antigua, the French Revolution broke out—bloody, humanist and anti-clerical. Within a year or so of Wesley's death, Napoleon, thrown up by the Revolution, dominated Europe, threatened Britain, and cut the lines of communication between her and both East and West. Yet, in those years, Methodist, Baptist, Anglican and Independent missionary societies came into existence, the Religious Tract Society and the Bible Society were formed, and great humanitarian reforms (notably the anti-slavery movement) were initiated and moved towards success. In part, all this was the 'practical' side of the evangelical movement in which John Wesley was the greatest figure. But the French Revolution itself, despite its cruelty and contempt of religion, was an assertion not only of the rights of man but, more, of the importance of the individual. Protestant missions, the humanitarian work of the reformers, the economic demands of Chartism and the political revolutions that swept through Europe in the early nineteenth century were, in their different ways, the symptoms of a new concern about the common and unprivileged man. It could reasonably be said that if Coke and Carey had not 'begun' modern missions, somebody else would have done. The climate

was productive of the missionary idea, and was one in which it could not help but grow.

At the same time, within Methodism itself there were two factors which helped to account for the forward leap which the missionary cause took after Coke's death. The first was that, in almost every field, the missionary went in response to a stated need. The original pioneers were unofficial and, nearly everywhere, they were soldiers. Methodism made a strong appeal to men in the army. Napoleon's campaigns led to regiments being posted very widely, even in the East. Soldiers in South Africa, Gibraltar, India, Ceylon and so on preached to their comrades and to the native peoples, and then followed this up by appeals to the Conference for ministers and chaplains.

The second important fact was that Methodism was already, at Wesley's death, a connexional system, accustomed both to complex organization and to direction from above. The first District Missionary Society in Leeds quickly gave place to the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society set up by Conference, which charged every local 'society' with its support. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that, from the beginning, the Methodist Missionary Society has been an integral part of the Church, never something separate from or in competition with it. Indeed, the Constitution states unequivocally that 'every member of the Methodist Church is as such a member of the Methodist Missionary Society'.

So much for the beginnings. We need not follow in detail the success that followed, except to note at once that while much of the success was very real, some was entirely transitory. We cannot easily have history without dates, however. In 1814 Coke, Lynch and others sailed for Ceylon, and in 1817 Lynch moved on to Madras. In 1815 Samuel Leigh went to Australia, and in 1820 established a Maori mission in New Zealand. Barnabas Shaw began our work in South Africa in 1816. Walter Lawry began preaching to the cannibals of the South Seas in 1822. A constant stream of eager young men went to West Africa, many of them to die in 'the white man's grave' before a month or so had passed. Alongside these distant ventures, Methodism launched into an evangelical attack on Alexandria, Palestine and Catholic Europe, setting up centres in France, Spain, the Ionian Islands, Germany, Sweden. The adventures of the pioneers and their wives are full of indomitable courage and personal heroism. Much of it is a 'success story' of the most magnificent kind. By the middle of the century cannibalism was being driven out of the South Sea Islands and a kind of responsible government was being set up. Human sacrifice was dwindling in the bloody lands of Ashanti and Dahomey. New Zealand was becoming a promising colony. Membership in the West Indies rose in the ten years after emancipation to 58,000. South Africa had its story of advance.

How are we to account for such a transformation in so short a time? Money poured in to the treasurers. Missionary magazines had a great sale, and missionary speakers (with the trophies they brought home as visual aids) commanded large congregations for long hours. In all this there was the attraction of danger being faced heroically. But missionaries did not merely tell tales that made the flesh creep; they pointed to villages and communities transformed by the Gospel. Their work demanded support. There were theological and economic conditions which made that support very considerable. The Victorians had a very

real belief in hell, and the reformers' enthusiasm that the British poor should live in better houses was matched by an evangelical concern that the heathen poor should not end up in eternal torment. (With our throwing overboard the fear that the heathen will go to hell we have come to accept, after a considerable time-lag, a neo-Victorian belief, paralytic of missionary support, that the unprivileged coloured people need little more than better houses, more money and some education.) Economically, Methodism was able to support its theological concern. Well consolidated, with a rapidly-expanding membership including many of the newly-rich commercial and industrial families of the Midlands and the North, Methodism was not short of money. Weekly collections at public worship were still rare, for every member paid his Class-money; by contrast, collections at missionary meetings, when there were still few other competing organizations, were very large indeed. Not least important, as a factor in missionary advance, was the unshakeable conviction held by missionaries and subscribers alike that Western civilization, and especially the British version of it, was, next to the Gospel, the most priceless gift we could bestow on 'the heathen'. That this would, in time, have the disastrous effect of equating overseas Christians with British 'agents', and the 'mission' with a shrewdly-constructed outpost of Western imperialism, it would have been impossible for the Victorians to understand. They could not, in any case, visualize a time when the sun would set on the Empire.

In the middle of the century the advance suddenly stopped. West Indian membership crashed by 20,000. By 1850 our stations in France and 200 members in Württemberg were all that remained of our European work. Money was withdrawn from Africa at a time when T. B. Freeman was planning new attacks on Dahomey. Worse still was the realization that, after fifty years, there were fewer than 400 members in India. Methodism had to take stock of the situation—and it had to do so at a moment when a new democratic revolution within the Church had resulted in a secession from the Wesleyans of 100,000 members in four years. It might almost have seemed that the missionary movement had run itself to death.

Nothing was further from the truth, though it had to stand and draw breath. Four things became specially, though not immediately clear. The first, a very obvious one, was that too much had been attempted too quickly. Sooner or later, because of a lack of man-power as much as a lack of money, withdrawals would have been inevitable. The second was that the Committee had given way to the temptation to support the colourful fields where there were spectacular successes at the expense of the really difficult ones, such as India, where historic religions were deeply entrenched. The third was that initial success must be followed by long periods of building up, that conversions such as those in the West Indies were deceptive in depth and quality. Much more was needed than preaching: pastoral work was as significant as success stories. The last, coming slowly, was that new agencies must be employed.

In time, these ideas gained ground. Consequently, the second half of the century was one both of advance and consolidation. 'The good man in a sun-helmet preaching to the natives under a palm-tree' had been as much a true picture as a caricature. There were still pioneers, but they were joined, before the end of the century, by teachers, doctors, nurses, and rather unromantic men

doing routine work in unpleasant, rather than heroic, situations. Throughout all our fields, the 'mission' was becoming a settled institution.

Advance came through new Societies, new agencies and the occupation of new fields. All these were involved together. The new Societies were those of the younger branches of Methodism, which began to send out their first missionaries—Methodist New Connexion (1859—Tientsin), United Methodist Free Churches (1864—Ningpo and, later, Kenya), Primitive Methodists (1870—Fernando Po), Bible Christians (1885—Yunnan).

Every one of these new Societies entered a new field. Though competing chapels might be built in the same street at home, there was no opposition overseas. China was slowly opening to the West, and the Wesleyans had taken the initiative, much against the better judgement of the newly-cautious secretariat, in 1851. They were shamed into doing so by a young Yorkshire farmer, George Piercy, who went at his own charges and challenged the home Church to take up this new task. The last of the new fields, Burma, was entered in 1884. With the exception of Fernando Po and, later, Sierra Leone, progress in all of these fields was to be depressingly slow.

It was, however, in the new fields that a completely new agency was tried out. Less than fifteen years after the first missionaries went to China, they began to realize that compassion must take a more effective form than giving simple palliatives to sick people. In 1864 the first Methodist doctor went to Hankow. From that time medical work has been a truly evangelistic agency. It has opened a new door to the Gospel and, even where there has been growing opposition to Westernization and 'colonialism', commended Christianity through its hospitals, clinics and training of nurses in lands where such services hardly existed. A further extension of this ministry of compassion began in Burma towards the end of the century, where the first 'refuge' for lepers was set up. Leprosy work developed in China and in India, where Dr Kerr was a pioneer at Dichpali. Much later, in Nigeria, Methodist doctors shared in researches and experiments which made all the difference between long-term periods in hospital and short-term cures.

The most far-reaching of the new ventures began in 1858, when a group of leading women met at the Mission House. Up to that time missionaries' wives had helped their husbands, but little more had been done to break through the reserves that surrounded women in 'missionary lands'. That afternoon there was formed 'The Ladies' Committee for the Amelioration of the Conditions of Women in Heathen Countries'. If the contrast between Victorian 'ladies' and heathen 'women' shocks our modern conscience, it also underlines the courage that was needed for Victorians to go to serve in places as far distant and apart as Moab, the West Indies and Fiji. At a period when Florence Nightingale was a national hero and relatives feared for the safety of the wives of army officers in India, the intrepid bravery of these early women missionaries needs a very special salute. Their early 'postings' were spasmodic and unplanned, but fairly soon a new strategy began to take shape, and before long 'Women's Work' was accepted as a necessity instead of a novelty.

It is impossible to leave this middle period without referring to the spectacular advance which characterized its end. From South-west China and South India, in lands where progress had been deplorably slow, came the incredible stories of

multitudes asking for baptism, and 'mass-movement' became a new missionary cliché. Rather later, the same story came from French West Africa as the figure of 'Prophet Harris' gripped the popular imagination. It was a wonderful end to a splendidly adventurous century.

The last fifty years demands either a special article or a paragraph! We shall compromise by selecting a number of main propositions and stating them fairly baldly. We still live too close to the situation fully to assess them all. First, then, this has been a period of growing nationalism, which has culminated in the recognition of a score of 'new and independent nations' since the end of the last war. They are as diverse in location and relationship with their former rulers as the Caribbean, the Philippines, Ghana and Indonesia, and the pressure still continues. This nationalist mood has inevitably included suspicion of the Christian Church as an outpost of imperialism, but on the other hand Christian leaders have been as firm in their demand for independence as non-Christians. In many cases, the Western missionaries have supported rather than opposed these aspirations, and have helped to train the new leaders to take their place in a new world. The new nations will always be in debt to the Christian Church. Without the missionary's work, some of them would have been far less ready for self-government. It has thus been natural that, alongside the pressure for independence, there should have been going on a process of devolution of authority in missionary areas. This is well illustrated in India, where three main 'general synods' were held. In the first, at the beginning of the century, there was one Indian minister amongst a conference of missionaries. A dozen years later there were more national ministers, but only one layman. At the third, held as the war ended, there were about equal numbers of missionaries and 'nationals', and half the latter were laymen and women.

In Methodism, this devolution has been carried much further by the setting up of new and independent Conferences, linked with but not subservient to the Conference in Britain. West Africa and the West Indies are the areas mainly affected.

In the East, of course, the process has already gone far beyond this. In South India, Methodism has sunk its identity in the Church of South India. This example will undoubtedly be followed in Ceylon, North India and Pakistan. Here is the supreme proof of the validity of the work begun by Nathaniel Gilbert when he started preaching to his slaves. The 'mission' has given place to the 'Church'. It is a fact hardly realized by many supporters of the missionary societies in the West. For us all, it is exemplified by the way in which Asian and African Christians are becoming leaders in the World Council of Churches. For Methodism, it will perhaps be most clearly shown in the appointment of a young West Indian minister, already a leader in the World Church, as one of the five Secretaries at the headquarters of the Methodist Missionary Society in London.

THE ORIGINS OF METHODISM IN THE WEST INDIES

The Story of the Gilbert Family

Frank Baker

THE FOUNDER of Methodism in the West Indies, Nathaniel Gilbert of Antigua, was illustrious not only in himself, but in his family. His forebears included Sir Humphrey Gilbert and Sir Walter Raleigh, his descendants and collaterals Sir George Gilbert Scott and William Scwenck Gilbert. The Gilbert family history is not an instance of one outstanding saint sported amid a host of nonentities. It would be possible, and if space permitted highly desirable, to write chapter after chapter of missionary romance about the members of the family, and still to leave woefully incomplete the impossible task of assessing their influence in the progress of evangelical churchmanship and missionary advance. Instead of a series of remotely connected anecdotes, however, the attempt is made here to present an articulated genealogical skeleton with a modicum of illustrative detail. The backbone will be furnished by the five generations of Nathaniel Gilberts, of whom the most important for our purpose is Nathaniel Gilbert III.

Nathaniel Gilbert I, whose ancestors came from Devonshire, left in Barbados members of his family, together with his 5 acres and two Negroes there, in order to enter the service of Christopher Codrington of Antigua, 'Captain-General of H.M.'s Leeward Charibee Island', who on his death in 1698 left 'to my overseer Nath^l. Gilbert & his wife £10 apiece for mourning'.¹ Gilbert himself died in 1703, already a well-to-do Antiguan planter. His widow (formerly Jane Duer) remarried, and 'married well'.¹

Her son, Nathaniel Gilbert II, was cared for by a generous stepfather and guardian in Captain John Lightfoot, master of the ship *Antigua Merchant*. Lightfoot not only sent Nathaniel II to Wadham College, Oxford (in 1714, at the age of seventeen), but later lent him £1,000 to set up for himself as a planter. After Lightfoot's death in 1735 his widow continued to remember her first husband and his family, and until her own death in 1753 gave her grandchildren, Jane and Grace Gilbert, 4,000 lb. of sugar annually—in those days a considerable gift.²

Prosperity dogged Nathaniel Gilbert II, and threatened to ruin him spiritually. In 1746 he could afford £650 per annum for a nine years' lease of Drew's Hill plantation with its 227 Negro slaves. In 1747 he acquired other land with attendant Negroes. By the time of his death in 1761 he had given his own name to a sugar plantation of 313 acres in St Peter's Parish, which long remained the family home. He became a Colonel of Militia, and (as Governor Thomas said) 'a very worthy member of the Council of Antigua' from 1750 until his death in 1761.³

Like his mother, Nathaniel Gilbert II married twice. By his first wife (of whom practically nothing is known) he had several children, headed by Nathaniel

Gilbert III, founder of Methodism in Antigua, and ably seconded by Francis Gilbert, who provided the impetus for his elder brother to seek out the Wesleys. The third son was John Gilbert, who became a Methodist doctor in Antigua. Of each of these and their descendants more must be said later.

The other four children of Nathaniel Gilbert II by his first wife were girls, and (one suspects) somewhat plain girls, for they all married widowers. The eldest, Jane, married Thomas Boddily, a widower with five children, who died suddenly at Bristol in 1765, whereupon she went to live with her brother Francis, then settled in Chester and became a respected member of the Methodist Society there. She died in 1775.⁴ Grace Gilbert became the second wife of the famous Methodist pioneer, Captain Thomas Webb, the saintly John Fletcher of Madeley uniting them at Whitchurch on 12th February 1773.⁵ Elizabeth's widower was Robert Bannister, Collector of Customs at Antigua, who died in 1765, after which she and their children also settled in Chester.⁶ The fourth daughter, Mary, became the second wife of an Antigua barrister, Edward Horne, who died in 1766. She bore him a succession of sons—Edward (1757), Gilbert (1758), William (1760), and, lastly, the well-known Rev. Melville Horne, born in 1762. Melville Horne became one of Wesley's preachers, and afterwards took up the reins from John Fletcher at Madeley. He held several curacies, and in 1792 he and his friend, Nathaniel Gilbert IV (of whom more later), went as missionaries to Sierra Leone, whence Horne returned in 1794 to become Chaplain of Magdalen Chapel, Bristol, and then Vicar of Olney.⁷

Nathaniel Gilbert II's second marriage was also fruitful of influential offspring. In 1739 he married Mary, daughter of Ambrose Lynch, herself a widow. The Lynch family became very prominent Methodists in Antigua, and formed other important marriage links with the Gilberts. The children of this second marriage included Ambrose Lynch Gilbert, a merchant who died in India in 1792, and Sarah Gilbert, who married Joshua Smith of Erlestoke Park, Wilts, M.P. for Devizes. The Smiths' first daughter Mary married Charles, 9th Earl of Northampton.⁸

With Nathaniel Gilbert III, eldest son of Nathaniel Gilbert II, we reach the Methodist generation. He seems to have been born in the early 1720s, and was sent to England for legal training, entering Gray's Inn on the 29th July 1741, where he was called to the Bar, on the 6th February 1746. He was called to the Bench on the 16th May 1760, but does not appear to have assumed the status of Benchers. Returning to practise in Antigua, he secured the Secretaryship of Antigua, and seems to have retained this office until 1760.⁹ In 1747 he was returned as one of the two Members of the Antigua Assembly for Old North Sound Division, elected in place of his father, who in 1750 was elevated to the Council. On 3rd February 1757 he resigned his seat in order to visit England, but was returned again on 6th September 1759 as the single Member for the Five Islands Division, the former member having resigned. In 1761 and 1762 he again represented the Five Islands Division, and in 1763 was chosen Speaker of the Assembly, continuing in this responsible position until his resignation from public life in 1769.¹⁰

The circumstances of Nathaniel Gilbert III's first marriage are obscure in the extreme. It seems almost certain that he married in England, probably immediately after being called to the Bar. It is also fairly certain that there were no

children of the marriage. The only concrete facts, however, are provided by a monumental inscription in St John's Cathedral, Antigua:

Here Lies Interred
the Body of MARY
the most deserving Wife of
NATH^l GILBERT jun^r
She was born in London
Sep^r 12th 1725
and died in Antigua
the 16th July 1747
in the 22^d Year of her Age.¹¹

A few years later Gilbert married again, this time into an old and prosperous Antiguan family. His wife was Elizabeth, younger daughter of Major William Lavington, who had been appointed a Puisne Judge in 1742. Strangely enough, no record of this marriage seems to have survived, though it may well have been registered on one of the defective pages of the St Philip's Parish Register. Like her husband, Elizabeth Gilbert was remarkable for her 'eminent piety'.¹²

On 22nd July 1752 their first child was baptized at St John's: 'Nathanael the S. of Nath^l Gilbert and Elizabeth his wife.' The registers show that the infant was buried the following day, and a long succession of girls intervened before the birth of the surviving Nathaniel Gilbert IV in 1761. All the children seem to have been educated in England, and most of them were placed under the care of their uncle, Francis Gilbert, in whose home they not only imbibed Methodist principles from a Methodist preacher, but occasionally sat at the same table as John Wesley himself.¹³

Nathaniel Gilbert's eldest daughter, Mary, was born on 28th February 1751. She was one of those prodigies of youthful piety greatly admired in early Methodism. Upon her death on 21st January 1768 at the age of sixteen, Wesley published *An Extract of Miss Mary Gilbert's Journal*, commending it in the Preface as 'genuine Christian Experience, painted in its native Colours', and on another occasion as 'a masterpiece in its kind'.¹⁴

The second daughter provided a similar example of devout adolescence closed by an early death. Born on 15th November 1753, and baptized Alice Reed on 4th December at St John's, she died of measles culminating in 'a consumption' at the home of her Uncle Francis. He seems to have penned the biography published by Wesley the following year—*A Short Account of the Life and Death of Miss Alice Gilbert, who died, August the 27th, 1772, in the Nineteenth Year of her Age*.¹⁵

The third daughter was Euphemia, born the 7th and baptized at St John's the 22nd April 1755. Before she died at a ripe old age on 17th November 1835, she had married (as his second wife) Dr Thomas Lynch of Antigua. Their children included Nathaniel Gilbert Lynch (born 1777), and John Burke Lynch, surgeon, who died in 1821 at Great Dunmow, Essex. Most important in this branch of the Gilbert genealogy, however, was Euphemia Lynch, born on 13th January and baptized at St John's on 24th February 1785—at the same time as an older brother and sister. Like many of the family, Euphemia Lynch was educated in England, and in 1806 married an English clergyman, the Rev. Thomas Scott, son of the famous Bible commentator. Among their many

children were another Euphemia, who married the Rev. J. H. Oldrid, the Rev. Melville Horne Scott, Canon of Lichfield and Archdeacon of Stafford, and Sir Gilbert Scott, R.A., famous architect and father of architects, designer of St Pancras Station and Hotel, but pre-eminently (to quote the *Dictionary of National Biography*) 'the greatest of architectural restorers'.¹⁶

Nathaniel Gilbert's fourth daughter was baptized at St John's with the name of Ann on the 7th February 1757. She married a parishioner of the Rev. John Fletcher, Timothy Yate of Madeley Hall, Shropshire, where she 'died well' in 1802. Their son, the Rev. George Lavington Yate (1795-1873) became Vicar of Wrockwardine, Shropshire, and *his* son, the Rev. George E. Yate, was Vicar of Fletcher's Madeley in 1893, when Vere Langford Oliver was engaged in his indefatigable researches into the history of Antigua.¹⁷

When Mr and Mrs Gilbert visited England in 1757, they took with them these four little girls, together with at least three coloured house-slaves. Clearly only a very strong motive could urge such a hazardous voyage, especially with England at war with France and the newspapers bristling with accounts of 'prizes' taken by the French, including many ships from the West Indies, and from Antigua. It *was* a strong motive. Nathaniel Gilbert III subjected himself and his family to great expense, discomfort, and danger, purely 'on a religious account'. Let his nephew, the Rev. Melville Horne, bear witness:

Nathaniel Gilbert of Antigua, on reading the *Appeals*, &c. of Mr Wesley, which had been sent him from this country by his brother Francis, observed 'The religion here described, if it be true, is what will make me happy, and it is what I have been seeking from my youth up.' To enquire into this religion, he made a voyage of some thousand miles across the Atlantic, with his wife and young children; though with his father's pointed disapprobation, and at the hazard of forfeiting his inheritance. After hearing Mr Wesley, conversing with him, and reading all his writings, he returned to Antigua, where he and his wife walked for many years as Zachariah and Elizabeth.¹⁸

John Wesley's prophetic account of a highlight of this visit, on Tuesday, 17th January 1758, is well known, but cannot be omitted:

I preached at Wandsworth. A gentleman, come from America, has again opened a door in this desolate place. In the morning I preached in Mr Gilbert's house. Two negro servants of his and a mulatto appear to be much awakened. Shall not His saving health be made known to all nations?

Nor must the sequel on 29th December 1758, be overlooked:

I rode to Wandsworth, and baptized two negroes belonging to Mr Gilbert, a gentleman lately come from Antigua. One of these is deeply convinced of sin, the other rejoices in God her Saviour, and is the first African Christian I have known. But shall not our Lord, in due time have these heathens also 'for His inheritance'?

On one of his visits to Gilbert's temporary home in Wandsworth, Wesley baptized his fifth daughter, Ann, born in 1758. She also grew up a good Methodist, a friend of the Fletchers of Madeley, and died unmarried on the 29th July 1832, aged seventy-three.¹⁹

Small wonder that Nathaniel Gilbert returned to Antigua in 1759 determined to seek the rich harvest promised by these first-fruits.²⁰ The better to accomplish this task, he sought the assistance of John Fletcher, not yet embarked on his Madeley ministry. Fletcher, however, protested that he possessed 'neither sufficient zeal, nor grace, nor talents', for 'a mission in the West Indies'.²¹ Gilbert must be his own preacher. He turned from the clergy to the laity. Mary Leadbetter, a young woman of twenty-six who had been converted and joined the Methodist Society under the ministry of Charles Wesley, had lost both children and husband. Shortly afterwards she met the Gilberts, and their tiny children fulfilled her frustrated maternal instincts. She readily accepted the pressing invitation to remain with the family, even against the advice of an anxious brother.

Nathaniel Gilbert was returning to an island where (in common with others) the value of coloured slaves was economic, not social or spiritual. Most people were genuinely amazed if it were hinted that slaves had souls. A contemporary description of Antigua in 1742 is revealing: 'There are 3,441 Christians and 24,695 Negroes.' The detailed census prepared in 1753 broke down the 'Totall of Inhabitants in the Island of Antigua' into men, women, boys, and girls—but left slaves unlisted. General emancipation of slaves was still impracticable, of course, and Wilberforce's attempt to abolish the slave trade forty years later failed, so that planters were merely 'advised to take all possible care of their slaves, so that they might increase by propagation and not by importation from Africa'. At least, however, they could be treated like Onesimus, as Christian slaves. Gilbert's new evangelical fervour clarified and deepened his convictions on this score, which may have begun with the Moravian mission to Antiguan Negroes in 1756. Some years later Gilbert wrote to that great advocate of emancipation, Anthony Benezet (who referred to him as 'my much esteemed friend'):

Your tracts concerning slavery are very just, and it is a matter I have often thought of, even before I became acquainted with the truth. Your arguments are forcible against purchasing slaves, or being any way concerned in that trade.

Gilbert's missionary enterprise in Antigua, therefore, was quite clearly to be among the slaves, and it is a noteworthy fact that even in 1793 of the 2,420 Methodists there only thirty-six were whites.²²

Immediately on arrival in Antigua, while Mary Leadbetter began teaching the Negroes on his sugar plantation, Gilbert conducted services for them. It is not surprising that the neighbours who were also invited proved unenthusiastic about worshipping alongside coloured people. (Could they indeed be considered as 'people'?) Gradually Gilbert's simple comments upon Wesley's *Sermons* developed into addresses, and then into authentic sermons. He found himself a lay preacher with a congregation of over 200 people, packed into the very largest room of his large house. The slaves responded so well that within a few months Gilbert was able to tell Wesley that scores of converted Negroes were now meeting in a Methodist Society Class in Antigua.²³

Nathaniel Gilbert senior died in 1761, his anger over his eldest son's conversion and quixotic scheme to Christianize the slaves modified, if not removed.

The residue of his estate, which, after the payment of many legacies, amounted to over £40,000, did after all come to Nathaniel Gilbert III. He omitted the name of one child from his will, however—that of his second son, Francis.²⁴

Francis Gilbert had been idolized by his father. He placed him in a comfortable business in St John's under the eye of an apparently honest clerk, who so took advantage of the young man's careless gaiety that both Francis and his father were nearly ruined. Francis fled from his father's rage to Jamaica, and thence to England, finding repentance and spiritual solace among the Methodists. Thus it was that he came to persuade his elder brother, Nathaniel, to make his long pilgrimage to sit at the feet of the Wesleys. Francis was admitted as an itinerant preacher at the Methodist Conference in 1758, although the lack of printed *Minutes* until 1765 prevents our following his career with certainty. One of his letters to Charles Wesley, written from Bristol in March 1760, reveals his anxiety to brave his father's wrath by returning to assist his brother:

It has been for some Years impress'd upon my Mind that I shall return again to Antigua, tho' I hope I shall never go till I have good Reasons to believe that it is the Will of God I shou'd. I believe the Way is clearing, & perhaps it will not be long 'ere I depart.²⁵

As a matter of fact he did not return until after his father's death, nor does he appear to have secured the episcopal ordination about which he consulted the Wesleys. Arrived in Antigua, Francis Gilbert not only helped his brother to evangelize the Negroes on the plantation, but hired a preaching-place in the capital of St John's, where were concentrated about half the free population of the island. Here 'his labours were crowned with abundant success'. In 1764, however, he returned to England, taking with him at least some of Nathaniel's children for the kind of education that only the home country could offer. These may have included the two sons who had been born after the Gilberts' return to Antigua.

Nathaniel Gilbert III mourned the death of his father and rejoiced at the long-delayed birth of Nathaniel Gilbert IV in the selfsame year of 1761. This late-born eldest son was educated in England by the evangelical Rector of Upton-Waters, Shropshire, named Hatton or Halton, and he himself was ordained, served John Fletcher and other vicars and then embarked as a missionary for Sierra Leone. From 1798 until his early death in 1807 he was the faithful Vicar of Bledlow, Bucks. In 1784, while curate of St Andrew's, Holbourn, the Rev. Nathaniel Gilbert IV married Sarah Maria, daughter of Darby Ford, of the well-known Quaker family of Coalbrookdale ironmasters, the ceremony being performed by Fletcher of Madeley. Their son, Nathaniel Gilbert V, also became a clergyman, who returned to Antigua to take over the family estate. He married his cousin, Grace Horne, daughter of the Rev. Melville Horne, and served both as Rector of St Paul's, Antigua, and as a Member of the Antigua Council. At the emancipation of his 207 slaves in 1835 he was awarded compensation amounting to £3,290 4s. 4d. His widow appears to have succeeded to 'Gilberts', which by 1878 had passed into other hands.²⁶

The remaining child of Nathaniel Gilbert III was William, whose dates are uncertain, given in the *Dictionary of National Biography* as '1760?-1825?'. (It

seems much more likely that he was born after, not before, Nathaniel IV.) William Gilbert achieved a modicum of fame not as a barrister, for which profession he was trained, but as a poet, albeit a mentally deranged poet. In their different ways Keats, Southey, and Montgomery were indebted to his *The Hurricane: a Theosophical and Western Eclogue*, and in his *Excursion* Wordsworth quoted a note to the *Hurricane* as 'one of the finest passages of modern English prose'. William Gilbert disappeared, supposedly in search of an imaginary African nation called the 'Gilberti', but ended his days in reasonable (and rational) circumstances in Charleston.

Arriving with his brood of nieces and, possibly, nephews in England in 1764, Francis Gilbert continued to serve as a Methodist itinerant preacher, and was a formative influence in the life of another itinerant, the Rev. John Mason. On 17th November 1767 he married Mrs Mary Leadbetter, who had long helped to mother his brother's children. They were married in Chester and lived there and at Whitchurch until 1773, when they returned to Antigua with the three surviving girls. Guardianship of the boys may well have been shared by their Aunt Grace, who had just married Captain Thomas Webb and settled in Bristol, and by their Aunts Bannister and Horne, both recently widowed and living in England.²⁷

The returning party of Gilberts arrived in Antigua only just in time to see Nathaniel Gilbert before his death. For some years failing health had prevented his long-proposed voyage to England to see them. He died on 20th April 1774, and was buried two days later at St Peter's. Francis Gilbert tried to maintain the Methodist Society in Antigua for his dead brother, but in the following year he was ordered back to England by his doctor, as the only possible means of avoiding a speedy death. Invigorated by a stormy crossing, later he flagged, and led 'a dying life' until his actual death on 1st July 1779. He had almost persuaded Francis Asbury to care for the 300 Antigua Methodists—but not quite. When his widow returned to Antigua in 1781 to see about her annuity from 'Gilberts', however, she found that John Baxter, a shipwright from Chatham, and a Methodist Local Preacher to boot, was rebuilding the Methodist Society. The interregnum had been filled by two converted slaves, Sophia Campbell, a Negress, and Mary Alley, a mulatto. One suspects, but cannot prove, that they were two of those who accompanied Nathaniel Gilbert to England in 1757.²⁸

Baxter's work almost restricted him to English Harbour, and Mary Gilbert felt called to take St John's under her wing. Here she regularly met two Methodist classes, one for coloured women and the other for white. On Friday evenings she opened her home for a service, when she herself expounded the Bible. She became one of the first female Chapel Stewards of Methodism, and was the chief promoter and administrator of the first Methodist Chapel in St John's, opened by John Baxter on 8th November 1782. Soon there were over 1,000 members, and in 1787 2,000, mostly Negroes—this out of a population of 2,590 whites, 1,230 freedmen, and 37,808 slaves. By this time the Moravians, the pioneers in Christian work among Antigua slaves, had 5,465 Negroes under their care.²⁹

The arrival of the providentially misdirected succour of Dr Thomas Coke and his comrades in 1786 finally put the West Indies mission on its feet, and Mrs

Gilbert happily resigned her task to them. Indeed, her own health was declining, and after her return to England in 1791—just too late to greet John Wesley again before his death—she was many times ‘shaken over the grave’. On one occasion she was rescued only by the skill and care of Dr John Gilbert. She lingered on, an invalid tenderly nursed by her niece, Henrietta, until 21st April 1816, and was buried in Paddington Churchyard.³⁰

We have seen that two of the sons of Nathaniel Gilbert II were the key men in founding Methodism in the West Indies. The family of their youngest brother, John, maintained the same tradition. He was born in Antigua about 1735, sent to school at Market Street, Bedfordshire, and thence in 1752 to Emmanuel College, Cambridge, where he secured his B.A. as 4th Wrangler in 1756, proceeding M.A. in 1759, and being incorporated the same year at Christ Church, Oxford, and licensed to practise medicine. He and his wife Jane (of whom nothing is known) had a son John, born 31st July, and baptized at St John’s on 14th September 1767. On 7th October 1798, this young man married Ann Hart, six months his junior, and the daughter of a landed proprietor. But—she was coloured. Seduction of a coloured woman would have excited little comment. His intention of marrying one, however, brought persecution and ostracism to John Gilbert. He resigned his commission in the Militia in face of a threatened court-martial; he lost his office as Notary Public; but his resolution was not shaken; he married Ann Hart. Despite continued persecution, theirs was a very happy marriage. Both were loyal Methodists, and gained general respect, especially in English Harbour. Eventually even the Governor’s lady paid court to Mrs Gilbert. John Gilbert himself remained a useful local preacher until his death in 1833.³¹

John Gilbert’s marriage linked him with other pillars of the Methodist community among the coloured folk, particularly with the descendants of Frances Clearkley. She had been converted under his uncle Nathaniel Gilbert III, and her home became a prominent Methodist meeting-place, offering frequent hospitality to John Baxter and Dr Thomas Coke. Her eldest daughter, Ann Clearkley, married a coloured planter named Barry Conyers Hart, whose home was also used for Methodist services. It was Hart’s daughter whom John Gilbert married. Another daughter, Elizabeth, married a Mr Thwaites, also a loyal Methodist, although employed as a teacher by the Church Missionary Society. The Gilberts and the Thwaites were responsible, among other things, for opening in 1809 in English Harbour the first Sunday school in the West Indies. They and others of their families played a part in spreading Methodism to Grenada, Trinidad, and St Kitts, and even farther afield.³²

This brief glimpse of missionary evangelism undertaken by the despised coloured people themselves, and of a Gilbert ready to marry into their ranks, furnishes a fitting demonstration of the success attending Nathaniel Gilbert’s labours and example. Such are the ramifications of the Christianizing influence of the Gilberts of Antigua, indeed, that one can only close with an exclamation from their favourite poet:

*See how great a flame aspires,
Kindled by a spark of grace!*

- ¹ V. L. Oliver, *The History of the Island of Antigua* (3 vols, 1894-9), I.150, II.12.
- ² *ibid.*, II.12-14, 181-3.
- ³ *ibid.*, II.12-14, 254, 282, III.380.
- ⁴ *ibid.*, II.13-14; J. Wesley, *Extract of Miss Mary Gilbert's Journal* (2nd edn, 1768), pp.17, 30, 50.
- ⁵ Whitchurch Parish Registers; W. P. Shrewsbury, *Early Methodism in Shropshire*, pp.94-8.
- ⁶ *Mary Gilbert's Journal*, pp.67-8.
- ⁷ Oliver's *Antigua*, II.82; L. Tyerman, *Wesley's Designated Successor*, pp.513-16.
- ⁸ Oliver's *Antigua*, II.12, 14, 206-7. Oliver wrongly claims that Francis Gilbert sprang from the second marriage; this is disproved by statements in his biography (which Oliver did not know), that he was the second son, and that at his death in 1779 he was fifty-four.
- ⁹ *ibid.*, III.322; cf. I.144, III.191. Information kindly supplied by F. H. Cowper, Esq., of Gray's Inn.
- ¹⁰ *ibid.*, I.cvii, cviii, cxviii-cxx, II.14.
- ¹¹ *ibid.*, II.16.
- ¹² *ibid.*, II.12, 15; *Mary Gilbert's Journal*, p.v.
- ¹³ Oliver's *Antigua*, II.12, 15; *Short Account of . . . Miss Alice Gilbert* (1773), pp.8-14, etc.; *Mary Gilbert's Journal*, pp.21, 45; cf. F. F. Bretherton, *Early Methodism In and Around Chester* (1903), pp.72-95.
- ¹⁴ R. Green's *Wesley Bibliography*, No. 250. The prefixed 'Short Account of Miss Mary Gilbert' was almost certainly written by her Uncle Francis, not by her father, as Green suggests; *Mary Gilbert's Journal*, p.iii; *John Wesley's Journal*, (standard edn), V.253.
- ¹⁵ Green's *Wesley Bibliography*, No. 292. Actually the title-page is incorrect, for she was fully nineteen at the time of her death.
- ¹⁶ Oliver's *Antigua*, II.206-7.
- ¹⁷ *ibid.*, II.13, 15; L. Tyerman, *John Wesley*, II.299.
- ¹⁸ M. Horne, *An Investigation of the Definition of Justifying Faith* (1809), p.36. Cf. H. F. Gilbert, *Memoirs of the Late Mrs Mary Gilbert* (1817), p.6.
- ¹⁹ *Wesley's Journal*, IV.247-8, 292; Oliver's *Antigua*, II.13, 153.
- ²⁰ The actual date of Gilbert's return remains in dispute. Thomas Coke's *History of the West Indies*, followed by the official historians, claims that he began preaching in Antigua in 1760. This is difficult (though not impossible) to reconcile with more nearly contemporary evidence. The account prefixed to *Mary Gilbert's Journal* clearly states that he 'left England in the beginning of the year 1759', and this is confirmed by his election to the Assembly in September 1759.
- ²¹ L. Tyerman, *Wesley's Designated Successor*, pp.36-7.
- ²² Oliver's *Antigua*, I.ciii, cxl, cxli; G. S. Brookes, *Friend Anthony Benezet* (1937), pp.306, 418.
- ²³ G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *History of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society* (1921), II.30-1.
- ²⁴ Oliver's *Antigua*, II.12; H. F. Gilbert's *Mrs Mary Gilbert*, p.11. Other members of the family endeavoured to atone for the father's harshness: his brother Nathaniel bequeathed £60 p.a., and his sister Jane left him £35 p.a., which was to be continued to his wife, and supplemented by £600 for any children they might have (Oliver's *Antigua*, II.13).
- ²⁵ *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society*, XXVII.146-8.
- ²⁶ Oliver's *Antigua*, I.cxlxi, II.13, 15, III.308, 317, 380; L. Tyerman, *Wesley's Designated Successor*, pp.513-15.
- ²⁷ T. Jackson, *Early Methodist Preachers* (4th edn, 1871), III.311; H. F. Gilbert's *Mrs Mary Gilbert*, p.11; *Mary Gilbert's Journal*, pp.67-8; cf. *Short Account of . . . Alice Gilbert*, p.11.
- ²⁸ H. F. Gilbert's *Mrs Mary Gilbert*, pp.13-20. Findlay and Holdsworth's *History of the W.M.M.S.*, II.32, 35. *Journal of Francis Asbury* (1958), I.149, where Asbury clearly intends Francis, not Nathaniel; cf. John Wesley's *Letters* (Standard edn), VI.148.
- ²⁹ H. F. Gilbert's *Mrs Mary Gilbert*, p.20; Oliver's *Antigua*, I.cxlxi, cxxvii, cxxx.
- ³⁰ H. F. Gilbert's *Mrs Mary Gilbert*, pp.21-52.
- ³¹ J. Horsford, *A Voice from the West Indies* (1856), pp.66-8; cf. Oliver's *Antigua*, II.15.
- ³² J. Horsford, *A Voice from the West Indies*, pp.105-20, 188-97.

WEST INDIAN CHURCHMANSHIP

Philip Potter

THE CHURCH has occupied a central place in the life of the West Indies as perhaps nowhere else. The reasons for this are well known. The African slaves transported to the West Indies were in fact separated from each other—family, tribal and language links were broken. They were not allowed to marry—they were treated as a stud farm, breeding being encouraged by a process of selection. This was the most thorough piece of dehumanization in history. Furthermore, there were the indentured white labourers made up of discharged criminals, deported debtors and the like. Pirates and buccaneers, black sheep of well-to-do European homes and ne'er-do-wells, all found their way to the West Indies. Planters and businessmen were, with few exceptions, men of shifty morals, degraded by the very system they so ruthlessly maintained. It was out of this flotsam and jetsam of humanity that West Indian society emerged.

The Church came to the West Indies with Christopher Columbus. His first act on reaching land was to plant the Cross. But the Arawak Indians who witnessed this solemn act with such welcoming wonder were soon to bear that cross until they were wiped out of the islands in a matter of twenty-five years or so. The Spaniards came in search of gold and souls. They got the gold at the expense of human bodies—and gained some souls. With the extinction of the Arawaks, the cross was placed on the shoulders of the Negro slaves.

With English settlement came the Church of England and later the Presbyterian Church. But the doors of these Churches were locked to the slaves. They were not considered to be human enough to hear and receive the Gospel, and, what is more to the point, to partake of the Body and Blood of Christ beside free men or even in the same place as they. Of course the gospel was very dangerous, for it had the seeds of revolution in it. It is part of the irony of Church history that Catholics and Protestants joined hands, not only in keeping away the gospel from the slaves, but in persecuting the missionaries who came later.

The Church in the West Indies really dates from 1732, when two Moravian missionaries from Germany arrived in the Danish Virgin Islands. Refused permission to preach to the slaves, they sold themselves into slavery. They chose to bear the cross *with* the slaves and so entered into the fellowship of Christ's sufferings and manifested the power of Christ's resurrection. This conception of the Church as the suffering servant of Christ bearing His reproach, the Church *beside* the people, has been a notable contribution of the Moravians to West Indian Churchmanship.

Another important date in West Indian Church history is 1760, for it marks the beginning of the ministry of the laity. Nathaniel and Francis Gilbert, Mrs Leadbetter (the governess of Nathaniel's children) and Nathaniel's two slaves converted by John Wesley at Wandsworth in 1758 were the pioneers of Methodism in the islands, beginning with Antigua. Transferred slaves to other islands brought the message of salvation along with them. Soldiers from Britain stationed all over the islands had heard Wesley preach somewhere in Britain.

John Baxter, a lay preacher who went as a shipwright to Antigua in 1778, tended the flock, and when Dr Coke's ship was driven by storms into St John's Harbour in 1786, he found a community of over 1,000. The first Sunday schools were started by lay people, mainly leisured ladies, who gave their services freely, often at great inconvenience to themselves both physically and socially. Early Methodism in the West Indies was to a large extent a lay movement.

Similarly, the Baptist Church had its origins in Jamaica in 1783 through the preaching of George Lisle and Moses Baker, two ex-slaves from the Southern states of America. In 1813 the Baptist Missionary Society responded to the call to send missionaries. These Baptist missionaries worked indefatigably and uncompromisingly for the abolition of slavery. The Congregational Church sent missionaries in 1808.

This quick survey is enough to show that the early history of the West Indies is to a considerable extent Church history. And the Church was the Church under the Cross. The most thorough Royal Commission, which visited the West Indies in 1938-9, reported:

The best friends of the Negro labourers were the missionaries and the Churches; and it is difficult to speak too highly of the devoted services of many of the missionaries, who even before emancipation had done all in their power, often in the face of bitter and violent opposition, to ameliorate the moral and the economic position of the negro population. The work of the religious bodies during this period served to win for the churches and religion a special place in the hearts and lives of the people. In developing education in particular the religious bodies have played a noteworthy part (*West India Royal Commission Report*, p.7).

In so far as there is a West Indian Society today, it is due largely to the fellowship of the Church. The people of God, called together by the saving work of Christ was the nucleus of the new people or nation. The family of God, gathered around the Word and the Sacraments in the congregation, was the incentive to family life. The Body of Christ sharing the common things of life became the rallying point of community life. For example, the comparative freedom from racial conflicts in the West Indies is not a little due to the Church's witness. In the years following emancipation all the Churches (including the Roman Catholic, Anglican and Presbyterian Churches) played their part in the development of West Indian society.

It might not be out of place, therefore, to examine a little more closely one or two elements in West Indian Churchmanship. Methodism shall be taken as an example, since it is the tradition best known to the writer.

The most remarkable element of West Indian Methodist Churchmanship is its emphasis on worship. Indeed, it can safely be said that the most classical form of Methodist Churchmanship can be found in the West Indies. If the Wesleys were to come amongst us again they would recognize their liturgical order and evangelical song most clearly in the chapels of the West Indian Islands. The Book of Offices is widely and regularly used. Even in remote villages, congregations made up largely of illiterate folk will chant the psalms, sing the responses and repeat the Elizabethan prayers of the Morning Service to the surprise of many a modern missionary to whom this service is strange! The Holy Communion is for them the celebration of the real presence of Christ. They

come in goodly numbers, dressed in sober colours (mostly white), to the Table of the Lord. And they know what they are doing there, for they usually abstain if they have quarrelled or done wrong—and this gives a good indication of the state of the society.

The great Christian festivals are enthusiastically observed. Christmas morning service begins at five o'clock with 'Christians, awake, salute the happy morn'. Lent and Eastertide are the occasions of meditation and rejoicing, and Holy Communion is celebrated on Easter Sunday. Whitsuntide is, in several areas, the joyful remembrance of the spirit of purity and grace, and white is the general form of dress. Harvest provides colourful expression to the people's gratitude for the fruits of the earth, a fact made poignant by the lack of other goods. And on All Saints' Day the graves are decked with flowers, and we are reminded, in the service for this day, of our blessed hope.

The distinctively Methodist services are also held. At the Watchnight Service congregations throng the churches to ring out the old year with 'O God, our help in ages past' and ring in the new with 'Come, let us anew, our journey pursue'. The solemn resolves made then find corporate expression in the Covenant Service on the first Sunday in the year or thereabouts. All active members try to attend with their Class-tickets, renewing their vows of allegiance to their Lord. The Recognition Service for new members is taken then (as also at Easter) when folk are received into membership only after months of preparation and teaching in our doctrines and polity. Synod is eagerly welcomed by both ministers and people and is always a time of refreshing. Missionary meetings are the highlight of the Church's efforts during the year. (They take the place largely of the Church Anniversary.) The reports then given always bring out the amazing sacrifices of poor people for the spread of the Gospel. In some places, notably in rural Jamaica, the folk make it a holiday, and the meeting is hardly less than three hours' long! We also have our own missionary work among the Valiente Indians of Central America, and Societies have within recent years been started among West Indian workers in the oil refineries in Aruba and Curaçao—through lay people in the first instance. The work of the West Indian Deaconess Order during the past thirty years among women and youth is a matter for deep gratitude to God.

Such worship-life provides the sinews of churchmanship in the West Indies. In the midst of poverty, insecurity, moral laxity and drabness, the sense of being caught up into the judgement and mercy of God and receiving His life in Word and Sacrament has been the sheet anchor of our people's existence. It is somewhat sad to observe the insensitiveness of some recent missionaries to this value of ordered worship beside the freer forms of worship which have become habitual in Britain. We have proved that worship is not just an optional extra, performed slapdash, but the indispensable offering of pardoned sinners whose only right is to call upon God's proffered grace with outstretched hands. It is painfully obvious to any observer that our people are not thereby saints, but at least they know that they are sinners. The heights of holiness may not be theirs, but they are ever aware of a holy God. Not for them the pally and pallid, grandfatherly God who has become the possession of bourgeois respectability—although that God is beginning to be formed among them. Perhaps the most touching and yet the most characteristic element in West Indian Christianity

is praise, thanksgiving. The present writer has been among congregations after a hurricane which destroyed their homes, their crops, their animals, their church. They were singing hymns of praise and repeating psalms of thanksgiving. Such a buoyant faith may not produce impeccable virtue, but it gives resilience in the midst of penury, and a blessed hope in the midst of despair and death.

With worship goes the practice of traditional Methodist polity. The Class Meetings of the early Methodists are still strong in the West Indies. The Leaders' Meeting is a living factor. Perhaps it leans more heavily on the side of judgement than on that of mercy towards erring members, but it helps to keep the conscience of our people alive. The quarterly Class Tickets are greatly prized and not perfunctorily given. But in one matter we have failed lamentably. The laity does not bear enough responsibility for the ordering of the life of the Church. Until quite recently our congregations could be truthfully called 'Minister-churches'. The minister raised the money to meet the circuit assessments, kept all circuit accounts, was manager of schools and a member of numerous committees in the local community. Of course, now that lay people are pulling their weight in society, the Churches are beginning to challenge them to give some of their talents for the ordering of Church life. But the Churches have not yet seriously undertaken the task of giving the laity the training and 'support they need to make effective representatives of the Church in their working life. . . . Only if our Churches succeed in being with their laity in the struggles of our present world will the laity in their turn become genuine representatives of the Church in areas of modern life to which otherwise the Church has no access' (*Evanston Speaks*, p.112).

The impact of the Churches on society has become more and more indirect with the years. The Churches have produced a respectable middle class which is the backbone of West Indian development—but this middle class has the virtues and the failings of the middle class anywhere. Its failings are more pronounced, because a sense of nationhood is a rather new thing in the West Indies. The malady of 'each man for himself' is very much with us, and the Churches have not greatly exposed it. There are, however, shining exceptions, for the best social welfare workers are churchmen and churchwomen. The Churches, in becoming respectable, have lost evangelistic fervour. Everybody (except the Hindu or Moslem and some Chinese) is baptized. The watchword is to keep the Churches going, not to break through to society. There may be occasional evangelistic campaigns which whip up the emotions of an excitable people, but there is little of the steady witness of an evangelizing congregation. The initiatives of the Churches in education and social welfare are now being rightly assumed by the whole community. But the Churches seem to be lost in lamentation over their deprived privileges. Moreover, the disease of Church disunity is with us as a deep, open sore—all the more because the Churches are so traditional in their outlook. The great assets which the Churches had as the makers of West Indian history are being frittered away. They seem to come under the condemnation of having the form of godliness, but not the force. It is not a happy picture.

The situation was well summed up by that acute observer, the late lamented Ernest Bingle, thus: 'In a word, the West Indies cries out for a new evangelism of social uplift in a rapidly changing society, of moral power and idealism in face

of degraded conditions, of a wider vision of the Church universal, of a fresh proclamation to those who have drifted away from the Churches. 'The opportunity is there; the time is short; the terms are new, if the problems are old.'

This is a challenge. But it cannot be taken up by the Churches in isolation from each other or from the Churches in other parts of the world. Nor can it be taken up by a reversion to the old ways. The West Indian Church does right to be faithful to the Word of truth in the Bible and to the basic creeds and liturgy of the Church universal. But it must listen to what God is saying to it in the rapid social and political changes in the West Indies and in the world at large. It must be humble enough to be renewed and to be sent out to be *with and beside* the people, as the first Moravian missionaries were. It must learn anew to be the Church under the Cross, for therein lies true churchmanship.

Called to Serve

Burning with holy fervour, and not counting their lives dear unto themselves, these servants of the most high God have gone forth in the midst of dangers to encounter difficulties, and to be exposed to perils in a variety of forms. Relying on the protection of that God, who upholds and directs all things by the word of his power, the pestilence which of late years has ravaged these occasionally insalubrious climates, has not been able to quench their sacred zeal. Though individuals have fallen victims to that fatal disease, the hearts of others have been moved to quit their Christian brethren; to take leave of their native country, and that perhaps for ever; to cross the vast Atlantic ocean; to enter into a burning zone, without any other prospect before them than that of hoping to be rendered useful to the negroes in the salvation of their souls; and without any other expectation of reward than that which they hope to receive 'in the resurrection of the just'.

To what cause can we attribute such distinguishing effects? On rational principles we cannot account for them; and yet they cannot be denied. As facts, the evidence is unquestionable; but if we look no further than man, the cause lies quite concealed. According to our modes of calculation, such conduct is totally unaccountable; but all is clear, decisive, and explicit, when we apply to the word of God.

In this view they were 'made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. In the sight of men, they were fools for Christ's sake; but the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.' It pleased him, who giveth to no one any account of his ways, to make use of these messengers of Heaven, as instruments in his hands, that he, 'through the foolishness of preaching, might save them that believe', and bestow spiritual liberty on those who were in bondage and in chains.

Thomas Coke, *A History of the West Indies, containing the Natural, Civil, and Ecclesiastical History of each Island: with an Account of the Missions instituted in those Islands, from the commencement of their Civilization; but more especially of the Missions which have been established in that Archipelago by the Society late in connexion with the Rev. John Wesley, Liverpool, 1808.*

THE SOCIOLOGICAL PATTERN IN THE WEST INDIES

Dora Dixon

IMAGINE STANDING on a West Indian street watching the passers-by and trying to classify them according to their racial groups. It would be easy to say of some, 'He is of European stock'—or African, Indian, Chinese or Assyrian as the case might be. But where would you put a person who has brown skin, but kinky hair? The hair obviously came from Africa; the colour of the skin may have come from India, but it may be the result of mixing African and European blood. Here in the West Indies a new nation is arising, and it is built from many racial groups, whether pure or mixed. The one thing of which we can be sure is that 400 years ago the ancestors of the present West Indians were anywhere in the world except the West Indies. Primitive races, the Arawaks and Caribs, occupied the West Indian islands then, but since the advent of the white man they have nearly become extinct.

In 1492 Columbus arrived in his search for a new way to the East, and he was followed by various white settlers. Some of the white settlers wanted to establish sugar plantations, and so they needed a large labour force. The Arawaks and Caribs were unsuitable because they could neither stand up to the conditions imposed nor to the white man's diseases. Therefore convicts and indented labourers were brought from Europe but their numbers were inadequate, and they too were unable to stand up to the conditions. Then came the beginnings of the African slave trade; it was soon obvious that the African was very desirable as a worker, and so the slave trade grew. After the abolition of slavery, a new labour force had to be recruited, and this time the planters turned to India. Many indented Indians were imported, especially into Trinidad and British Guiana. There was a great difference, however, between the importation of the African and that of the Indian. The African was torn from his culture pattern and forbidden to speak his language or practise his religion. The Indian was allowed to bring his religion with him. Thus in an island where the majority of people are of African stock (e.g. Jamaica), we can still trace African features, African laughter and African folk-stories, but not much more. In British Guiana and Trinidad, however, we find strong links with India, especially the links of the mosque and Hindu temple.

Just to add further variety, both Chinese and Assyrians have arrived during the last fifty years, and are taking their place in commerce, the professions and agriculture.

How far then is the Church working within an integrated society, and how far is it having to bridge racial gaps? The answer to this question varies greatly from colony to colony. In the Bahamas (which in any case do not like to think of themselves as part of the West Indies) there is a strong colour bar. The Church is tackling that situation, but it is not easy. For instance, a hostel for schoolgirls has been established by one denomination to serve both black and white children. Because of this, there has been a certain amount of criticism by white members of that denomination and some financial help has been

withheld. In British Guiana the tension is not so much between black and white, but rather between the East Indian, as he is called (i.e. the man whose ancestors originated in India) and the West Indian, whose family has African blood in it. East Indians make up forty-seven per cent. of the population here and they hope that that forty-seven per cent. will soon be changed into fifty-one per cent. Large families and continued immigration are supporting this hope. There is a racial consciousness which enters into both political and religious spheres. On the whole, it would be true to say that an English Church worker would be more acceptable in an East Indian community than a West Indian worker, despite the great nationalism of today.

In Jamaica, however, there is almost complete racial integration. There is a certain 'shade' consciousness, and at present, the lighter your skin, the higher your social position. This 'shade' consciousness is akin to the English 'class' consciousness, and it is being attacked in every sphere, for the man of ability is rising to leadership, whatever his colour. The Jamaican Church feels that it has a real contribution to make to the World Church in this matter. Recently one Jamaican Church leader attended an inter-racial conference in the southern states of U.S.A. There he met the issue of colour as he never meets it in his home island, and he urged the American Church to approach this question with great love, but also with great courage.

The racial heritage and experience of the West Indian nation have a very strong influence on family life. In the East Indian communities marriages take place at an early age (although not so early as previously) and parents take most of the initiative in arranging the marriage.

In the family life of the West Indian community the influence of slavery is still felt keenly. Slavery existed for 300 years and was only abolished about 125 years ago. During those 300 years, slaves were forbidden to marry and yet they were encouraged to bear children. (The more slave children born, the richer the slave owner.) Not only were slaves forbidden to marry, but a man could be suddenly torn from his children and the mother of his children though mother and children were far less likely to be separated than father and children. Consequently, the man with deep emotional attachments to his family was likely to be very hurt, and therefore partly in self-defence he developed a casual attitude towards sexual union. Probably, in this direction, the man suffered more under slavery than the woman.

When emancipation came, marriage became a legal possibility for the ex-slave. There was not a great rush to be married, however, for several reasons. One reason was that of inertia. We must never forget how slavery sapped the vitality and initiative of many slaves. It took some of them all their time to adjust themselves to their new legal status with all that was implied in becoming small land-holders or wage earners, and they never took the opportunity to alter their social status by being married. Nowadays the inertia is not so great—in fact it is amazing to realize the present vigour of the nation when one recalls the earlier apathy—but the force of tradition over the last 120 years points to concubinage and not marriage.

Lack of money also operated against marriage, and it still does. The weddings of planters, which the slaves had seen, were very elaborate, involving considerable expense for clothes and food. The quiet wedding was (and still is) almost

unknown. Nearly every wedding cake has fourteen or fifteen dozen eggs in it. Nearly every bride has six or more bridesmaids. Young people are not in a position to meet this expense. Some of them take out an insurance policy and get married when that policy matures; in the meantime, however, they live in concubinage.

Lack of money also militates against marriage in another way. When a man and woman live together in concubinage, people are quite happy for the woman to work and make her financial contribution to the home. In the common view, however, it should not be necessary for the married woman to work. She may do so, but it should not be an economic 'must'. In fact, it is often felt that a married woman ought to have domestic help in the home. Thus before a man can contemplate marriage he must be in a reasonable financial position, and sometimes he is not in this state until he is fifty or sixty years old. Then he crowns many years of faithful concubinage with marriage, and all his children and grandchildren come to the wedding.

Another reason which operates against marriage for the ordinary West Indian is the respect which he has for the marriage vows. The middle-class West Indian, whose numbers are rapidly increasing with the extension of the education services, more or less follows the Western pattern of marriage—and unfortunately its pattern of divorce. The lower-class West Indian, however, feels that the marriage vow is one which should not be broken. Therefore he is hesitant to enter into it.

All this, of course, affects the percentage of illegitimate births. In the islands where the descendants of slaves are in the majority, the illegitimacy rates are high—somewhere between seventy and eighty per cent. In areas where there is also a strong East Indian community, the rate is much lower—somewhere about 40 per cent.

There are great differences between illegitimacy in the West Indies and in England. For instance, the illegitimate child in England bears a heavy load of shame; he is different from the other children. In the West Indies, the child bears neither the same shame nor the same loneliness. How can he when the majority of his schoolfellows are in the same situation as himself?

Furthermore, in England the illegitimate child is nearly always born to a single woman who has no permanent relationship with the father. She rarely shares his home. In the West Indies many of the illegitimate children are born into concubinage. There are some exceptions to this generalization. Sometimes a single woman will have a child as a security against poverty in her old age. At present there are no resources in the islands to make possible old age pensions, and poverty in old age is acute and dreadful. Children are very good about caring for their parents, and many of them accept financial responsibility—that is partly why so many immigrants into England buy postal orders regularly and send them back home.

There are also, of course, instances where young single girls (aged fifteen, sixteen, or seventeen) have babies. Usually their mothers are very angry at the beginning of their pregnancy and threaten to turn their daughters out of the home. Some time before the birth, however, Mother usually repents, and when the baby is born she treats it as her own youngest child. Thus the relationship of grandmother and grandchild is that of mother and child, while that of mother

and child becomes the relationship normally found between elder and younger sisters.

Despite all the extenuating circumstances, no responsible person is satisfied with the high rate of illegitimacy, for it causes real suffering, especially to the children. Even when they live in homes of faithful partners, they lack the influence of a father, for a man rarely acknowledges his parental responsibilities before he marries. Marriage is a sign that he is acknowledging these responsibilities. All this, of course, makes it very hard for the Church to convey any real understanding of the Fatherhood of God.

If the concubinage partnership breaks, which may happen after a period of years, the suffering of the children is much greater. Generally speaking, they stay with the mother, and if she does not find a new partner, she alone has to find means of supporting them. She may take out a court order against the father for their maintenance, but she is often reluctant to do so. The difficulty about this is that it is left to her to gather the money, and the man is not always willing and able to pay it. Sometimes she sends the children themselves to gather it, as they have a greater power of appeal, but this puts them in a very embarrassing position. If the mother herself finds a new partner, she has a little more security, but her children probably have less. Rarely is a man happy about seeing another man's child in his home. Therefore, as the man appears, the child tends to disappear, only returning for food when he thinks it wise.

Much of the suffering of this kind is borne by the intelligent, sensitive, good children. There are today Church leaders who themselves are illegitimate, and they have a deep concern for the problem. They do not condemn, but help and teach.

Actually, many organizations are trying to tackle this problem. A few years ago one group interested in social welfare advocated mass marriages, when all the couples living in concubinage in the village were invited to share in a wedding. The real idea was to reduce the expense, because one wedding feast and one set of wedding finery would serve many couples, and the cost could be shared. Recently, mass marriages have become less popular, for they have tended to break up more easily than other marriages.

Another social welfare group, which is interested in all social problems, has produced simple reading matter for adults who are learning to read. One of the booklets they use urges marriage, and points out that children born into wedlock have legal protection if the father deserts or dies. The same group has also done a great deal of work in helping people to improve their homes, for part of this problem is tied up with poor housing.

The Church too is very concerned about the issue. Its teaching is well known. In one area where there was almost a minor mass movement two or three years ago, the men who were asking to be received into the Church said, 'We know, of course, that we shall have to get married, Parson'. The teaching is partly well known because of disciplinary action—action which would seem very hard in England. For instance, if a woman bears an illegitimate child, many denominations put her out of membership. This does not mean that the Church no longer cares for her; indeed, there are wonderful examples of ordinary Church members exercising real pastoral care over such a woman, and helping

her back into membership when she understands something of repentance. Then in some Churches illegitimate children are not baptized in the normal way; either the service is held at a different hour or else it is held in the school-room instead of the church. This hurts a West Indian's love of ceremony. When the woman is still living with the man, baptism is often refused.

We all wish there were an easy solution to the problem. If the spending of large sums of money or the carrying out of an intensive teaching programme would solve the issue, how we should jump at it. But there is no easy solution. The Church has proved itself to be the greatest force in establishing regular family life, but there is still a great deal more for it to do.

THE TRAINING OF THE MINISTRY

Herbert J. Cook

TWO HUNDRED years ago gracious Georgian styles were appearing in the new colonial houses, giving distinction to many Caribbean cities. The cities now have so far outgrown their old limits that these noble homes have long since been swallowed up by the expanding commercial sections. Where they stood, modern concrete buildings, for the most part, stand today, though here and there a conscious effort to preserve the past has saved a house from demolition, and it remains to remind us of a bygone way of life. For a large number of people the colonial house is a symbol of theology—inviting enough 200 years ago, ready now to be scrapped, or perhaps to be preserved as an historic relic. They see a new world with new ways; this ancient structure only cumpers the ground.

The message of the missionary was doubly assured. It carried its own assurance and authority, founded as it was on the Bible; but it also had a second assurance because it was backed by and interpreted through a culture which had no serious rival among the hearers. How could any of the simple listeners imagine a better life, except that which was an imitation of their master's? How could their vision of improvement make them see more than a slightly nearer approach to the 'great house' and its glory? Theology was inviting because it meant 'I've got a shoes; you've got a shoes; all God's chillun got a shoes'.

This conception of progress prevailed until the last quarter-century. Every step forward could be marked by some closer approximation to the white man's way; every ambition could be expressed as an increasing desire for the blessings of western civilization. Today, however, the new Caribbean man is talking about 'our culture' and 'our way of life'. He is no longer content to follow behind somebody else, and accept other men's ready-made interpretations of scientific and commercial progress. He wants to interpret the gifts of his age for himself. He wants to judge again and for himself the culture which his fathers blindly grasped. The culture he is judging afresh includes the Christian Church. Is the Church a hangover from colonial times? Is it a part of a bygone age, ready for scrapping?

The proportion of the population which attends the Churches is smaller than ever before. Although Church membership is actually increasing, it is not doing so at the same rate as the population. This decrease is understandable in view of the changed thinking of the people of the Caribbean; for so often the outsider sees the Church in charge of the missionary, and it appears as something imported, not belonging to his own soil. This is not the view of the Church members, who are intensely loyal to all ministers alike; but it is the view of the outsider. Stress on the training of an indigenous Ministry, therefore, has gained tremendous weight in the last few years. The Church must produce West Indian leadership.

This new stress on the West Indian Ministry, however, is not merely a reaction to a new political and social situation. The newly self-conscious area of the Caribbean demands its place in the consideration of the vast question of the

relevance of the Gospel. There are very few old missionaries in this area. And some who have finished their work here have done so with a certain sense of disillusionment. They passed from the stage of mastery, when everything lay in their hands, to a stage of bewilderment, when they seemed to understand nothing that was happening. This is because the challenge to the relevance of Christianity, which might have been spread over two hundred years of developing interpretation, has come in one generation—our generation.

The missionary of former times scarcely had to think of this problem of relevance. He could assume that his message was both needed and adequate. The people were hungry in their souls, and their souls had nothing else to feed on except his word of hope. So they were content to follow, only half understanding the texts and hymns with which they comforted themselves, but firm in faith. The situation today is very different. There is no longer a *tabula rasa* waiting for the impressions of the kindly scribe. The tablet is already filled with a multitude of inscriptions, and often the only place for religion is in the margin. The missionary is faced with the task of entering into the thinking of people, and without the assistance of the complex process of learning their language. The very fact that the people speak English may lull him into the false feeling that he already knows how they think.

There are a great many alternatives to Christianity. The gospel of the political reform and the new constitution have been vehemently preached, and by many firmly believed. People have learned that some of the problems which the Church patiently—perhaps too patiently—grappled with can be solved quickly by social and economic reforms. They are learning how much lies in the hands of man, so that for many things he does not need to cry so much to God. The relevance of Christianity to the new life of this area still has to be proved to the ordinary man. Therefore the Church is insisting that this great task be undertaken by men who have grown up in this new situation, who are in it, not because they sympathetically approach it with their counsel, but because they belong there, deeply involved in the turbulently adolescent or the calmer adult life of the new Caribbean. The training of the ministry within their area is a primary task.

The Churches in general have awakened to this need. The Methodist work at Caenwood College has now been strengthened by the co-operation of five other Churches, and together we have formed the Union Theological Seminary. The adoption of this title reminds us of our theological task here. Our new interest in the training of the ministry is not merely due to the expediency of the moment. It is much more than a hurried patching-up of a deficiency. It is basically the beginning of an attempt to answer some fundamental questions.

It has been suggested that the primary problem of the Caribbean is the problem of lost identity. 'Who am I?' is a question which many generations could not answer, and which many more have evaded. Those who were uprooted from Africa and transported to the West Indies and the neighbouring mainlands lost their language and their traditions. The kind of myth in which the identity of a people is made intelligible no longer existed for them. So for many generations 'Who am I?' could not be answered. Then a new self-awareness grew against the background of slavery. It was an awareness that wanted to forget the background, that shunned any remembrance of slavery.

So for a long time 'Who am I?' was evaded. But such evasiveness cannot last much longer. Signs of its passing are found in the young writers and thinkers of the West Indies, who use such images as that of the tree. The people is the tree: roots in the mud and soil, trunk growing in solid strength, flower and fruit just appearing, and the full glory not yet seen.

Caribbean man has accordingly known the experience of the self in flight from itself, and his new experience began when he became conscious of the flight. The moment of self-pity has passed safely, and he is trying to find his own authentic existence in relation to the complex existence of his world.

The adjustment of life in the Caribbean to the conditions of the twentieth century has speeded forward remarkably in the last twenty years. The achievement is so obvious, that with it has grown the danger of seeing all progress as an acquisition of technical ability, and of assessing the success of education in terms of technological grasp. In these circumstances, there is a natural tendency to neglect the inner relationship of man with the things he must learn to handle, with what he must learn to suffer, and with those hindrances to his self-achievement which arise from his multitudinous collisions with things, in daily contact with people, and through the inevitable distractions of everyday needs. So the new man's primary problem is the problem of identity. Having within him the burden of the past, and confronted with the complexity of his present world, he is engaged in finding his authentic being.

This is a theological task. But it cannot be undertaken by European theology, or German, or British, or American; it needs a Caribbean theology. Not of course that a doctrine of man can be confined to a doctrine of Caribbean man; but it must be a view of mankind directly apprehended through a Caribbean consciousness, illustrating—and indeed producing—those inner relationships with the world which lead Caribbean man to answer the question 'Who am I?' The doctrine of God's relationship with his world cannot be confined to the world of sugar and hurricanes and infant industries; but it must show God's world oriented in both perspective and distance to a Caribbean eye. We forget that there are particular orientations in the theology in which we were nurtured: they are so deeply rooted in the tradition of thinking in the Church in England or in Europe, that we forget that what we have learned is British theology, or Continental theology. But contact with a newly-born nation makes us suddenly aware that, while politicians and reformers of all kinds have been preparing the way for the new people, the Church has failed to become fully identified with them and has allowed a nation to come to birth without a theology.

For this reason, the Union Theological Seminary must see its duties as extending beyond the plain needs of ministerial training. Or, to put it another way, it must see that the training of the ministry proceeds alongside and integrated with the duty of producing a Caribbean theology.

This task is scarcely begun. The necessity for financial economy among the Churches which are still on the receiving end of the missionary endeavour naturally leads to economy in staffing a seminary. Consequently the lecturer often finds he cannot give to his preparation the kind of long, slow thinking that the theological need requires. Also it is a burning need that intermingled with these should be more Caribbean minds. The need is for more theologians fully involved in the life of the area.

All I have said about the need for a Caribbean theology could be applied—*mutatis mutandis*—to any similarly definable area of the world. It goes a good deal farther than the usual assessment of the indigenization of Christianity. The promotion of the indigenous Church has usually concentrated on organization, language, liturgy, and related subjects. This is insufficient. The main themes of theology must be brought into consideration, and the whole become indigenous.

The question may be asked: how far is the production of an indigenous theology proper? Is it proper to make a theology a particular interpretation of the common tradition of Protestantism, and to produce further diversity in the thinking of the world Church? Only a brief indication of the answer to this question can be given within the limits of this article.

The best place to begin is where theological thinking logically begins, that is, with the experience of a man newly awakened to faith. He is aware that, while his faith is an all-embracing subjective experience, it is also essentially something given to him. The same sort of double reference becomes apparent in thinking about the content of faith; the essential given is there with what is essentially his own. There is a great mass of Christian teaching and tradition upon which he can draw to explain this given element; the Bible is open to him; but no explanation becomes theology for him until it expresses his own relationship with God and his own experience of redemption. In other words, he approaches the given material of theology with existential questions which can only be satisfied with existential answers. In this sense a man's theology is individual to himself. It seems therefore reasonable that men who have the same general encounter with the world and who have the same general circumstances of existence will need a theology suitable to their general world of ideas and experiences.

A wide field of speculative theology is clearly open to all. The common ground of experience will also be fairly extensive. But the inner relations of man with his world, the relations which make his authentic self, vary widely through different parts of the world. Since the subjective side of faith is the response of this authentic self to the revelation of God in Christ, both the faith and ethic of Christianity will find expressions indicative of these differences. Theology cannot be theology unless it is indigenous.

With these needs pressing upon us in our task of ministerial training in the Caribbean, we are strongly aware of the lateness of the hour. Only after 200 years have we discovered our theological duty. The reasons for this have already been suggested: the acceptability of the missionary's message, the lack of a language barrier so that the easiest way of filling a vacancy was always to get a man from the home Church (he could preach to the people the day he landed), and the late awakening of the whole life of the area. But this belated awareness of our duty makes us wonder if we have yet seen the whole of it.

Does theological training properly limit itself to the training of a ministry? Is not one of the greatest needs of the Churches now a new order of lay service? Methodism, for instance, has always been proud of the service of its laymen. But behind that general pride, is there any real satisfaction with the basic two services—Local Preacher and Class Leader? Perhaps our need is for the strengthening of these two orders alongside a new order of the laity, an order of

people trained in the Christian ethic and evangel suitable to their trade or profession, so that both by Christian living and by propaganda a constant pressure may be brought to bear upon those who so far have remained untouched by the Church. Such a need will make great calls upon our theological colleges. Have we in the colleges yet seen the whole of our duty? In the Caribbean area, at least, we know that our theological task is only just begun.

AN APPROACH TO EVANGELISM

John Hoad

THE REV. HERBERT J. COOK, of Union Theological Seminary, Jamaica, has written in another article in this symposium of the need for indigenous theological thinking in the Caribbean,¹ and I would have liked this article on evangelism to be a contribution to such thinking. But although a native of the Caribbean myself, a Barbadian at present working in British Guiana, I do not think that my theological thinking is as yet really indigenous.

One cannot 'work up' such thinking. The sight of mango and coconut trees, of rice fields and sugar factories, the warmth, the brightness of perennial sunshine—these cannot guarantee it. Such thinking can only arise as one hears the voice of a people's heart and the voice of a people's need, and at the same time the voice of the Saviour, blending and evoking significant patterns of thought, preaching, and action. It is not easy to 'meet' (in Buber's sense) even one other person, far less a people. It is not easy to meet the Saviour. It is not easy to bring Him and another into a vital, lasting, transforming encounter. There is a divine simplicity about the whole thing, but it is not an easily won simplicity, and I have seen not a few missionaries fail to make the grade. They remained (despite their good work) tourists, spectators of the Caribbean scene.

But the same has also been true of a great number of local men. Many of us too have failed to become really creative channels of communication. As I have said, I doubt that I myself have made the grade. I discover all too much 'static' interfering with my attempt to get on the same wave-length as my hearers, even as I observe a great deal of 'static' interfering with their hearing of the Gospel. Speaker and listeners, we are all children of our class and culture, our education, traditions, history, circumstances, sin. We are very testaceous, and these outer integuments of the grain of wheat are not easily put off that it may die and be fruitful. Where successful contact is achieved, it is usually a case of God speaking in spite of and even in contradiction to what we are. The question recurs insistently: 'Have I broken through? Have I so reached my people with the Gospel as to see a response in them that could be described as "life from the dead"?'

That is my problem. It is also the larger problem of all evangelism. It can only be solved by knowledge of God and of oneself and of other people; but chiefly of God. If evangelism is not to be, like Job's brethren, 'a channel of brooks that pass away', it must find its continual source, inspiration and guidance

in the Scriptural revelation of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Evangelism is primarily a revelation, an idea and conception, before it is a strategy, a technique, an activity.² It is out of growing encounter with the Lord of the Scriptures that there springs increasing effective liberty in communication with men. The nearer we are to Him, the nearer we are to being truly, universally human. It is as we abide in Him and let His words abide in us that we bear fruit and see our prayers answered.

Now, 'the biblical revelation of God is essentially the proclamation of a missionary Being' (Marcus Ward).³ That God loves a perishing world and has made eternal life possible for it is our missionary manifesto (Jn 3₁₆). We go to another with the Gospel because Christ lived for him, and died for him, and lives for him. There were three major classes of outcast in our Lord's day: there were those who led an immoral life (adulterers, swindlers), those who followed a dishonourable calling (tax-collectors),⁴ and those who were socially banned because of disease (lepers). Jesus offered His friendship to people of all three classes. In His teaching He vindicated His action by reference to the mercy of God towards the unthankful and evil. His prohibition of judging is (in Luke's setting, Lk 6₃₇) a warning to 'church-people' not to set up a religious division between 'the righteous' and 'sinners'.⁵ There is a division between man and man, but it is a division between sinners redeemed solely by the mercy of God and sinners 'who have not yet my Saviour known'. Jesus was concerned for the outsider and in a hundred ways pressed this concern upon His disciples.

Not until this concern has become a central, determinative factor in our Church programmes can we be said to be in earnest about evangelism. Without losing hold of an absolutely essential 'interior life', we must become radically re-oriented towards the world.⁶ The Church in the Caribbean is largely in urgent need of this 'second conversion'.⁷ We lose many a battle through lack of witness. We fume at this or that action by secular leaders, and deplore the way the world is going, and exhaust our steam in committees. Our forefathers, our founder and our Lord took their message into the open-air (which today includes the press and the radio). We have a not inconsiderable tradition of street-corner preaching in the Caribbean (our weather certainly favours it!), but it is too sporadic, too much of an 'extra'.

The Church was constituted to be the light of the world, called to be the company of those who wait for the return of Jesus Christ as the Lord of *all* men, and who live accordingly *now*, witnessing His lordship, the triumph of His grace, to *all*. Confessing Jesus as Lord, and given by this confession (and by this confession alone) a point of leverage outside the world, she must speak to the world. Her speaking will have three major frontiers to cross: the frontier between non-Christian religious faith and Christian faith, the frontier between post-Christian lack of faith and Christian faith, and the frontier between formal and vital Christian faith. Everywhere there is need to recapture those who have drifted out of the Christian faith. In British Guiana and Trinidad, chiefly, there is much room for the evangelization of those of other religious faiths. In general, however, the Caribbean is a Christianized area.

In such a situation certain tones of our evangelism are specially required. There is continual need to insist on the decisiveness of faith in Christ. 'It is a temptation of the middle years of one's ministry to lose the distinction between

the lost and the saved,' the Rev. J. H. Stringer once remarked. It is certainly a temptation to Caribbean Methodism in the hour of its bicentenary. I am troubled by a statement like that of D. T. Niles: 'If to be within the Church is to be a person for whom Christ died, then the Church is co-extensive with mankind.'⁸ Scripture seems to me to speak differently from that (cf. Acts 26¹⁸, 2 Cor. 2¹⁵⁻¹⁶, Col. 1¹³, Heb. 4³, 1 Jn. 5¹⁹). I can just agree with F. D. Maurice that 'the Church is human society in its normal state; the World, that same society irregular and abnormal'.⁹ But I would stress, in my old Principal's words: 'If God is Father, He must desire that His children have relations with Him. If the relationship is not recognized in the experience of His children, men are not saved. The consciousness of the relationship is not a secondary thing. It is an essential part of the relationship' (Dr Newton Flew).¹⁰

With this definiteness in the statement of saving faith, I would give priority to the vigorous preaching and pursuit of Christian perfection. This is the answer not only to our very prevalent so-called moral problems and the widespread worldliness of our people, but also to such a problem as race prejudice. It is true that the West Indies could give some parts of the world a lesson in multi-racial 'dwelling together in unity'. It remains true, however, that a strong undercurrent of racial prejudice runs through our social, political and Church life. The Church has given no distinctive lead in this matter. It could do so if it took seriously our primitive Wesleyan legacy to spread Scriptural Holiness over the land; for holiness is perfect love, a love in which 'names and sects and parties fall' and a man is neither 'proud nor ashamed'¹¹ of his own race or of another's.

What, finally, of the means? A list of methods of evangelism in the Caribbean would hardly differ from an English list. We need a recovery of biblical preaching,¹² and I believe that the regular means of grace could be great evangelistic opportunities, if only, as I have said elsewhere,¹³ 'we will personalize them and teach their meaning and practise the presence of Christ in them'. (I give Communion at every service at which I preach.¹⁴) In the Caribbean, liturgical renewal is not so much a matter of reviving something that has fallen into disuse as of giving Christian content to something that has fallen into formal and even superstitious misuse.

A good survey of methods and of the evangelistic picture in general is given in the report of the Commission on Evangelism and Social Action, prepared for the Consultative Assembly of Presbyterian Churches of the Caribbean (Trinidad, 1957). I would underscore their contention and 'the most effective means of evangelism is through the life and activity of the Church as an evangelizing fellowship'. Such a fellowship is required if we are to make real headway in straightening out the twisted social structure we have inherited from slavery. Against illegitimacy and promiscuity, for instance, we have won only piecemeal victories. We do win individuals and couples to the practice of the Christian standards of chastity and marriage, but it is often after a long period of deviation from them and the success can be very fragile. These standards have not yet been embodied in an active social tradition within the Church, accepted and practised by a close-knit fellowship in which members care for and watch over one another and leaven the community at large.

If the Church is to be such an evangelizing fellowship, we need to hasten the

day of full lay partnership, privilege, initiative and responsibility. The lesson must be learned that Lesslie Newbigin¹⁵ expressed thus: 'It is still hard to bring even keen and instructed churchmen to the point of seeing that the Church's life and witness, her encounter with the world and therefore her place of obedience, is precisely in the work of her lay members from Monday to Saturday; that so far from "church work" being something which primarily happens on Sunday, it is something which primarily happens from Monday to Saturday, Sunday being the day on which the Church makes a necessary withdrawal from its engagement with the world in order to renew the inner springs of the divine life within her through word and sacraments.' Were that lesson learned, the Church in the Caribbean could play as significant a role in the day of our nationhood as she did in the day of our emancipation.

Methodism here could perhaps profit from an injection of the doctrine and practice of the Inner Light. This emphasizes personal responsibility, sensitive to God's individual guidance. The Holy Spirit is the supreme director and executor of evangelism, and we must not resist His leading, even though the result cannot be reported on a Synod form. The Rev. W. D. Easton told the Puerto Rico Consultation in 1957 that 'the significance of a people or of a Church does not depend upon numerical size, but on the source of its life'.¹⁶ It is helpful to tabulate ways of evangelism, but in the end we have to report to God for our evangelistic orders and equipment. There is a variety of gifts, and the Holy Spirit has not exhausted His resources or surprises. Marco Depestre's experiment in rural evangelism in Haiti, for example, wonderfully overleaps the regular classifications.¹⁷ 'God appoints to every one of His creatures a separate mission', wrote John Ruskin,¹⁸ 'and if they discharge it honourably, if they quit themselves like men and faithfully follow that light which is in them, withdrawing from it all cold and quenching influence, there will assuredly come of it such burning as, in its appointed mode and measure, shall shine before men, and be of service constant and holy.'

¹ Also, W. J. J. Farris, *The Listening Isles: Records of the Caribbean Consultation* (Puerto Rico, 1957), pp.14-15.

² J. W. Sweetman, 'The Theological Basis of the Christian Mission', in *Papers on the Theology of Missions* (Glen Lake, Michigan, 1957), p.36.

³ *ibid.*, p.6.

⁴ J. Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, p.106.

⁵ T. W. Manson, *The Servant-Messiah* (p.59): 'The Chosen Few are not chosen to act as censors over the rest of mankind, but for a career of service.'

⁶ Dorothee Hoch, *Gott liebt die Welt* (Zwingli Verlag Zürich, 1958).

⁷ *ibid.*, p.48.

⁸ Quoted by Marcus Ward, *Papers on the Theology of Missions*, p.14n. Contrast R. F. Cushman, *ibid.*, pp.30-1, and G. C. Berkouwer's contention (in *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth*) that Karl Barth's view of the universality of salvation robs proclamation of any decisive content.

⁹ *Theological Essays*, 'On the Unity of the Church'.

¹⁰ *The Idea of Perfection*, p.24.

¹¹ Peter Abrahams, 'The Last Freedom', *The Listener* (21st February 1952).

¹² 'A manifestation of the Incarnate Word, from the Written Word, by the spoken word'—Bernard Manning, *A Layman in the Ministry*, p.138.

¹³ *The Listening Isles: Records of the Caribbean Consultation* (Puerto Rico, 1957), p.78.

¹⁴ But I do not use the Communion Service more than once a month at any church.

¹⁵ *One Body, One Gospel, One World*, pp.16-17.

¹⁶ *The Listening Isles*, p.62.

¹⁷ *ibid.*, pp.81ff.

¹⁸ *Modern Painters*, Vol. I, Part II, Sect. 1, Chap. 7, para. 8.

THE CONCEPT OF HOLINESS

John G. Davies

‘THE OLD TESTAMENT is not contrary to the New’ (Article VII). Although this statement is taken from an Anglican formulary, it may be regarded as representative of a view shared by all Christian communions. As a general thesis, affirming the unity of the two Testaments and the identity of the Creator God and the Saviour God, it is unlikely to be called in question at the present day. Nevertheless, should it be understood to mean that there are no passages in the Old Testament requiring not merely correction, but even rejection in the light of the New, then its validity is certainly suspect. Indeed, the existence of such sections caused acute embarrassment to the Christians of the second century, many of whom welcomed Gnosticism and Marcionitism precisely because these movements removed the stumbling blocks by condemning the Old Testament *in toto*. The Church, largely by the use of allegory, preserved the Old Testament as a precious and necessary part of the Christian inheritance, but at times through a misunderstanding of the literal meaning, from lack of critical equipment, it endorsed certain beliefs and practices which the modern critical approach to the Bible renders suspect. This may be illustrated from an examination of the concept of holiness.

By holiness is meant that complex of elements distinguished so clearly by Rudolph Otto in his book, *The Idea of the Holy* (1917). This complex includes both non-rational and rational features—Awefulness, Overpoweringness, Wholly-otherness, Creature-feeling, Fascination—the Numinous—together with that moral content, traces of which were no doubt there from the earliest times, upon which the eighth-century Hebrew prophets laid such stress. Holiness also includes psychical intensity and power—divine potency, vouchsafed by God, the source of holiness, to man. With this comprehensive definition in mind, we may now turn to the Old Testament and examine the concept of holiness as it is there portrayed and, one might say, evoked. Yet this examination is not without its difficulties. As long as the Graf-Wellhausen theory of the sources of the Pentateuch, dividing it into J, E, D and P, was unquestioned, and as long as it was assumed that the date of these documents indicated the date of their contents, the development of a theme could be traced with some confidence as to the relative accuracy of the result. But now that this theory is in part being broken down, and there is recognition that many elements have had a long pre-literary history, it becomes less easy to define the stages of advancement in thought. Yet it seems to the present writer not impossible to provide a sketch of the broad outlines of the concept of holiness and to distinguish to a certain extent between the pre-exilic and post-exilic attitudes.

In early Israel there was no impassable gulf between the human and the divine worlds, for holiness, which was the natural element of the latter, was also to be found throughout the world of men and of nature. Nevertheless, holiness was not consistent with the claims of everyday life; it involved isolation from the workaday world and its customs. So the mother of Samson was forbidden to consume wine or strong drink or to touch unclean food, and Samson himself

was to allow no razor upon his head (Judges 13₅). Samson was indeed the Nazirite *par excellence*, one of that band of men who for a shorter or longer period could live a consecrated life, being 'holy unto Yahweh', a 'nazir of God'. In this the Nazirite was like the warrior, who for the duration of a campaign cut himself off from ordinary living and became the 'sanctified of Yahweh' (Isa. 13₃).

War and the Nazirite were not the only means of sanctification; there was also the cult, celebrated throughout the length and breadth of the land in sanctuaries which had been made holy by the presence of God and whose consecration legends had been carefully treasured in oral and possibly written tradition. At these local sanctuaries priests and cultic prophets exercised their ministries. The former were holy because of their daily association with holy things, while the latter owed their holiness to their possession of the divine spirit; both were concerned to spread holiness throughout the land and to contribute towards its renewal. This holiness could be dreadful as well as full of blessing—witness the fate of Uzzah when he sought to steady the ark—but neither prophet nor priest was concerned to insulate the populace from it, but to facilitate their approach. At the royal chapel in Jerusalem the same situation obtained; there the king was the central figure in the cult, and indeed the priesthood was largely his creation, deriving its authority from him and acting as his servant. So holiness in the pre-exilic period had a certain spontaneous character: it was relatively free from systematization, and even if its possession by the people was intermittent, the possibility was always there.

The post-exilic attitude to holiness, as far as it can be distinguished from that which had obtained previously, owed its difference to two main factors: the suppression of the local sanctuaries, and the disappearance of the monarchy.

Although centralization of worship was attempted before the exile, in the abortive Josianic reform, the first of these two factors did not really become operative until the return, when Deuteronomy acquired pre-eminence and Jerusalem was the inevitable focus of the repatriated Hebrews. The effect of this was to concentrate holiness in Jerusalem and in particular in the Temple. The structure of the Temple changed accordingly. Solomon's building had only one court, but in the later monarchical period a division was made into two, largely on account of the extension necessitated by increasing activity. In Ezekiel's blue-print, inner and outer courts are *de rigueur*, but it was not until the Hasmoneans, when Alexander Jannaeus was attacked in the inner courts, that the people were finally shut out and the 'court of the priests' was established. The final development is to be seen in the Herodian Temple, in which a further court for non-Israelites was provided. This progressive fencing off of the sanctuary reflects the increasing emphasis upon holiness and degrees of holiness which issued ultimately in the many degrees of the Mishnah: *Kelim* (1₆₁)—*'The land of Israel is holier than any other land. . . . The walled cities are still more holy . . . within the wall of Jerusalem is still more holy . . . the Temple Mount is still more holy . . . the Rampart is still more holy . . . the Court of the Women is still more holy . . . the Court of the Israelites is still more holy . . . the Court of the Priests is still more holy . . . between the Porch and Altar is still more holy . . . the Sanctuary is still more holy . . . the Holy of Holies is still more holy, for none may enter there save only the High Priest on the Day of*

Atonement.' So the ancient shrine was closed in its innermost parts to all but the priesthood, and a rigid distinction between priesthood and laity had been effected.

Even within the Old Testament this division does not pass unchallenged, as may be seen from the story of Korah, Dathan and Abiram. This account, which is most probably post-exilic, records a revolt against the idea that any caste is specially holy. Korah, representing the lower priesthood, and Dathan and Abiram, representing the laity, unite against their leaders and state their position quite clearly in these words: 'Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves against the assembly of the Lord?' (Num. 16.) The fearful fate of these groups is then represented as a divine judgement upon their presumption, and the priestly and hierarchical concept of holiness triumphs.

The second main factor in the crystallization of the post-exilic concept of holiness was, as we have said, the disappearance of the monarchy. Originally the king was a key figure in the cult, and in the time of Solomon palace and Temple were closely connected, being enclosed by a common wall. The priesthood too was a royal creation, but with the ending of the monarchy it achieved supremacy and even came to regard the king's activities in connexion with the cult as a usurpation. Ezekiel could in fact go so far as to state that the Temple had been defiled by the presence of the royal tombs (43₇). Yet the High Priest could not fully replace the king as the centre of national unity; indeed he was surrounded by a holy aristocracy which served as a barrier to the people's direct access to the holy. The priestly caste, says Pedersen (*Israel*, III-IV, 1940, p.197), 'formed the transition between the human and the divine worlds, but thus it blocked the way for the ordinary Israelite to the highest things life can offer. As Joel dreamt of a time when all Israelites would be prophets, another prophet consistently saw Israel made perfect by all Israelites becoming priests—'ye shall be named the priests of the Lord: men shall call you the ministers of our God' (Isa. 61₆).

For a more complete understanding of the Old Testament concept of holiness, notice must also be taken of the relationship between the holy, or sacred, and the profane. In pre-exilic thought the profane is simply that which is not holy; it is that which belongs to everyday life, so that the bread on the table is described as profane (1 Sam. 21₆). At first there was no rigid barrier between the two, for while 'to profane' was to draw something into ordinary life, this did not necessarily involve antagonism to the holy; hence, for example, grapes had to be sanctified in the fourth year of the vine's growth (Lev. 19₂₄), but afterwards they could be eaten by men who removed them from the sacred sphere to that of daily life and thereby performed a profanation (Deut. 20₆, 28₃₀; Jer. 31₅). Antagonism to the holy only arose when alien elements were present. The struggle with Canaanite religion, together with the pressure of the great political powers, gradually created a tendency to regard all that was foreign as alien and therefore outside the sphere of holiness. This became effective after the exile, for previously, for example, Doeg, the Edomite, lived in the Israelite temple at Nob (1 Sam. 21₈), and even as late as Nehemiah, the priest Eliashib was prepared to permit an Ammonite a cell in the Temple (Neh. 13₄₁). This was not to be allowed to continue; Ezekiel would allow no foreigners in the Lord's house

(447). Such a strict line was drawn between the sacred and the profane that the latter tended to be regarded as the alien and hence as the unclean—the common was thus set at a great distance from the holy.

So the Hebrews tended more and more to withdraw into themselves and to surround their inner life with a shell as a defence. All defilement was to be avoided and the laws of uncleanness were developed to extreme lengths. This in fact is but another element in the process whereby the Temple became more and more isolated and holiness gradually lost its connexion with the life of the people, its laws being elaborated to form a separate and self-contained system.

To complete this cursory biblical survey, we should now direct our attention to the New Testament, but before doing so a short essay in application may be interjected, application on two levels: first to the early Church, and second to the contemporary situation.

The history of the early Church provides a remarkable parallel to the development just outlined. As in the Old Testament and intertestamental periods there is an increasing clericalization of Israel's religion with an accompanying sundering of priesthood and people, so in the period of the early Church there is a growing clericalization of the religion of the New Israel with an accompanying sundering of priesthood and people. This is not the place to enter upon the vexed question of the growth of the threefold ministry, but attention may be called to one aspect of that, namely the influence upon it of the Old Testament record. This is made plain at an early date in *1 Clement*: 'unto the High Priest his proper services have been assigned, and to the priests their proper office is appointed, and upon the levites their proper ministrations are laid' (c. 40). From amongst many parallels, we may cite the *Apostolic Constitutions*: the holy bishops 'are your high priests, as the presbyters are your priests, and your present deacons instead of your levites' (225). The Christian ministry is thus equated with the Temple hierarchy, and the natural consequence is that the former, like the latter, became progressively dissociated from the people, producing a separation which is in no wise better illustrated than by the incident, recorded by Theodoret (*H.E.*, v, 18, 20-5), of Ambrose's curt dismissal of the emperor Theodosius from the chancel on the grounds that as a layman he had no right to be there. There is no reason to suppose that this parallelism was just fortuitous, a chance resemblance between two entirely independent movements; rather it would seem to have arisen from the fact that the early Christians searched the Old Testament to find practice and precept to guide the regulation of their affairs, and this naturally led the Church to think of its ministry more and more in sacerdotal terms and to define its functions largely in terms of worship.

A very clear example of this is provided by the history of the diaconate. Initially the deacon was the bishop's right-hand man, 'his eyes, his ears and hands', according to one document (*Const. Ap.*, 244). He was the principal channel of communication between the people and their leader—the recipient of charities, the organ of discipline, the examiner of letters commendatory, the visitor of the sick, the minister of the confessors in prison; indeed it would be difficult to set bounds to his duties. Gradually, however, one after another of these was taken from him, while at the same time his liturgical importance grew, until eventually he became no more than an adjunct to the most solemn act of Christian worship and had little *raison d'être* outside it.

The parallelism under observation also extends specifically to the concept of holiness. We are here concerned not only with the way in which the *hagioi* of the New Testament became a title more and more restricted, but with the effect of the gradual acceptance of the Old Testament standpoint which emphasized isolation from everyday life, this being one of the factors in the growth of the monastic movement and in the establishing of the idea of two standards, the precepts and the counsels of perfection. It is, moreover, to be seen operative in Eucharistic devotion. A recognizable change in religious sentiment took place whereby the Eucharist, which had been primarily the sacrament of loving communion, became invested with attributes of cultic dread. Since this has already been examined by Edmund Bishop in an appendix to R. H. Connolly's edition of the Liturgical Homilies of Narsai (1909, pp.92-7), there is only need to recall the salient points. Cyril of Jerusalem is the first witness to this attitude when, in his fifth Mystagogical Lecture, he speaks of 'that most awful hour', with reference not to communion but to consecration. In this he is to be contrasted with the Cappadocian fathers, but was followed by John Chrysostom, who laid great stress on the *mysterium tremendum* of the divine presence, and it was this teaching that was embodied in the later Greek liturgies. Narsai himself, probably under Antiochene influence, shared the same attitude, and could affirm: 'the dread mysteries are being consecrated; let everyone be in fear and dread while they are being performed' (op. cit., p.10), and, again, 'let all the people be in fear at this moment in which the adorable Mysteries are being accomplished by the descent of the Spirit' (p.22). This would seem to be evidence of an acceptance of the Old Testament concept, for holiness is isolated and insulated within the iconostasis and, being all but unapproachable, requires non-communicating attendance.

The progress towards the position just outlined was already under way when Eusebius of Caesarea referred to the sanctuary of the church at Tyre as the holy of holies (*H.E.*, x, 44). It is true that this is found in a panegyric, but the appellation became more and more common—there had been a great change from the days of the Upper Room with its essentially domestic atmosphere and with its consequent intimate relation with the things of everyday life. The Nestorians could, however, improve upon this, having a small recess containing a cross at the east end of their churches, which they called the holy of holies and into which not even the priest was allowed to enter.¹

If the Western rites give little vocal expression to this sense of awesome dread, its prevalence is nevertheless demonstrable from the practice of the silent recitation of the eucharistic prayer and from certain structural changes. The evidence relating to silent recitation indicates that in east Syria in the fifth century most of the prayers were inaudible, that this was adopted in some Greek churches in the sixth century and in Constantinople in the next 200 years, and that in Rome, apart from the prefaces and some cues, it was the custom before AD 700. As for structural changes, we may instance the intercessions that replaced the prayers for the communicants and for the effects of communion, apparently upon the basis of the belief that prayer is especially effective in the presence of the consecrated sacrament—that is, before the holy. Similarly the inclusion of a blessing, which was in some cases to disappear later, after the celebrant had communicated and before the communion of the people, is

symptomatic of the feeling that the 'profane' laity ought not to communicate, which soon issued in their general abstention. To be associated with this is the almost complete disappearance of the offerings of the people and the substitution of 'holy' bread made by priests or nuns.

To make this essay in application complete, inquiry should also be made whether or not this parallelism between the Israel of the Old Testament and the early Church is discernible today. It may be recognized in the following facts: (1) There are sections of Christendom today where the distinction between priesthood and laity is of the same rigid kind.² (2) These are sections of Christendom where the forms of worship in use emphasize this distinction by assigning an essentially passive role to the congregation. (3) There are sections of Christendom where non-communicating attendance is not infrequent. (4) There are sections of Christendom where the church buildings are as isolated and as unapproached as was the holy of holies, largely because the people see no connexion between what there takes place and their daily life; thus the holy and the everyday are as sundered for many as ever they were in ancient Israel.

So far our concern has been with the more or less objective task of recording developments, pointing to parallels and indicating consequences; but the question must also be asked: are these developments legitimate? Here the New Testament revelation provides a touchstone for judgement. Let us ask, then, What is the New Testament conception of the holy?

The New Testament falls not a whit behind the Old in its affirmation that God is the Holy One. The sense of the numinous is as evident in Peter's cry: 'Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord' (Lk 5₈), as it is in Isaiah's 'Woe is me! for I am undone' (Isa. 6₅). The demand for strict ethical behaviour is not less insistent. In other words, the content of holiness is not changed, but there is a great difference in the way in which the relationship between it and everyday life is now understood.

This is immediately apparent in St Paul's statement to the Corinthians: 'ye are a temple of God . . . the temple of God is holy, and such are ye' (1 Cor. 3_{16f}). The Greek word used is *naos*, that is, the sanctuary or holy of holies. An immense revolution has certainly taken place when a Hebrew of the Hebrews like Paul is able to call a heterogeneous group of believers, living in a riotous sea-port in a foreign land, the very tabernacle of the divine presence. And he can write in his second letter: 'we are a temple of the living God; even as God said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; I will be their God, and they shall be my people' (2 Cor. 6₁₆).

The Epistle to the Hebrews shares this identical view when it speaks of Christ entering the veil as our forerunner (6₂₀), so that through Him we 'have boldness to enter into the holy place' (10₁₉). This recalls the Synoptic Gospels, with their record of the rending of the Temple veil at the death of Christ, and the Epistle to the Ephesians, with its reference to the breaking down of the middle wall of partition (2₁₄). All Christians are now *hagioi*, and all too are priests—'a royal priesthood, a holy nation', according to 1 Peter (2₉), and according to Revelation the Lamb has 'made them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests' (5₁₀).

This holiness is therefore not confined to any one caste nor is its possession intermittent, for it stems from the completed work of Christ and the possession

of the Holy Spirit—an abiding possession whereby the faithful are progressively sanctified. All this, then, is the effect of the advent of the Christ who has not only taught that the Holy One is a heavenly Father, but has in Himself bridged the gulf between the divine and the human, between the sacred and the profane, so that henceforth there is nothing that is human that by its nature lies outside the sphere of holiness; all is capable of redemption and sanctification. Hence when Peter says: 'I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean', he is told: 'what God hath cleansed, make not thou common' (Acts 10_{14f}).

We are thus presented in the New Testament with a conception of holiness, and of the relation of the holy and the profane, which does not so much fulfil the Old Testament ideas as replace them. This contrast may be underlined, at the cost of some repetition, by noting the following points. According to Hebrew thought, holiness is (1) nationalistic, (2) even territorial, (3) focused in a building, (4) intermittent, (5) appropriated largely through a priestly aristocracy, (6) cut off from everyday life and (7) centred in the Temple cult. So, despite the intense personal communion with God of a Jeremiah or a Deutero-Isaiah or even of individual Pharisees in the time of Christ, the post-exilic policy of Habbdallah or Separation had issued in a conception of the holy God as a remote and transcendent being, brought no nearer by the intercalation of intermediaries such as the Memra, the Skekinah or angels.

In the New Testament, on the other hand, holiness is (1) available for Jew and Gentile, without the necessity of the latter becoming a Jew, (2) ecumenical in the original sense of the word, (3) no longer confined in a building, but present in the living stones of the Christian *ecclesia*, (4) an abiding presence, (5) appropriated by all believers, (6) not only a constant element in everyday life, but subsuming that day-to-day existence into itself and (7) found in all contingencies and not only in cultic acts. A word of further explanation is needed on this last point. Christian worship, as it appears in the New Testament, is not lacking in a sense of the numinous—hence St Paul's statement that the unproved communicant eats and drinks judgement to himself (1 Cor. 11₂₉). But this is not so much a feeling of dread as one of humbleness and fear-to-salvation induced by a self-knowledge which prompts the cry: I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof. Joy and a sense of fellowship with Christ, and in Him with one another, are the predominant notes of this anticipation of the Messianic Banquet. The Eucharist is a necessary renewal of communion that it may be real in day-to-day existence, which is not separate from nor on a different level to the cult, but is continuous with it, since both worship and daily life are under the supreme sovereignty of the one glorified Lord.

And now for the final essay in application. In so far as the development of the ministry and of eucharistic devotion and the liturgies stemmed in part from the Old Testament understanding of the holy and its relation to everyday life, it is difficult to provide it with an adequate justification. It is one thing to have a ministry understood in terms of responsibility and function; it is quite another to have a ministry understood in terms of privilege and office. It is, of course, possible to identify certain of the influences that served to direct these developments along their particular paths. During the persecutions the contrast between the Church and the world was all too obvious, and this tension inevitably encouraged the tendency to think of the sacred and the profane as distinct.

Again, the entrance into the Church of so many nominal Christians under Constantine, and the later mass conversions of the northern barbarians, produced critical situations wherein the frontiers between the Church and the world became blurred, and in taking steps to deal with this the Church quite naturally turned to the Old Testament for guidance, without however subjecting it to a critical examination which in any case it was unequipped to do. St Paul had said that 'whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning' (Rom. 15₄), but he also observed a distinction between what was to be imitated and what was not: 'these things happened unto them by way of example; and they were written for our admonition' (1 Cor. 10₁₁). It is possible that if the Church of the early centuries had had at its disposal the critical methods of today, it would have regarded the Old Testament concept of the holy as 'written for our admonition'. But this is one of the 'if's' of history that it would be vain to pursue. There is, however, one point that may be emphasized. It has been customary, at least since Harnack, to discuss the Hellenization of the Gospel as it progressed in the Gentile world. If this brief study has accomplished anything, it has perhaps shown that attention must also be directed, not so much to the influence of Judaism, which has long been recognized in New Testament studies, as to what may be termed the pre-critical patristic approach to the Old Testament. This is not a plea for neo-Marcionitism, but for an attempt to understand what the Old Testament says, and how far this is accepted, rejected or fulfilled in the New Testament, and then for an examination of the extent to which a misunderstanding of this has affected the teaching of the Fathers. In this task biblical and patristic scholarship meet.

All that has been said hitherto serves to emphasize, if emphasis were necessary, the importance of the present-day re-thinking of the theology of the Church, the ministry and the Sacraments, the widely recognized need for liturgical reform, and the effect which all this must have on parochial strategy and pastoral aims.

Holiness, according to the rough definition given at the outset, is a complex entity, combining both rational and non-rational elements, the ethical and the numinous. This produces a tension which is of the very essence of holiness and which is often falsely resolved at the present day. On the one hand, by an overstress on the ethical, Christianity is reduced to a moral code; on the other hand, by an overstress on the numinous, Christianity is reduced to attendance at worship at differing intervals of time. The one tends to lay stress on individual conversion, salvation and conduct, the other on corporate offering and sacramental fellowship. Both can be forms of Pietism, the one individual and the other liturgical; both are overemphases; and both sunder the holy and the profane in the manner of later Judaism. The parish priest or minister has not fulfilled his task when he has taught his people how to behave. Where Christianity is only an ethical code, it is scarcely distinguishable from the more enlightened forms of humanism; whereas it is the believer's duty so to be in communion with God that he reveals the holy in his day-to-day living. And this means more than being good; it means revealing the holy in all its complexity, including the numinous. Nor has the parish priest or minister fulfilled his task when he has filled his church; he may only be fostering an *ecclesiola* rather than contributing to the building up of the *ecclesia*. For the *ecclesia* has a mission to

the world at large, and its teaching of the Incarnation reveals the self-abasement of the holy that all that is common may be lifted up to the divine level.

The continuity and identity between worship and life, the sanctifying of the profane, are at the heart of the Christian gospel and must be the aims of every Christian. Their sundering in the fourth and fifth centuries, with the accompanying infrequent communion and passive attendance, led to a degradation of social life, which became purely secular; today, history repeats itself to a greater or less degree in different centres. The true Church in fact should combine both the ethical, which tends to be characteristic of Protestantism, and the numinous, which tends to be characteristic of Catholicism; and in this fusion both must be prepared to surrender much of the cherished bric-à-brac, accumulated through the centuries, which is not of the essence of biblical Christianity.

¹ Mention might also be made here of the peculiar orientation of the Constantinian buildings, with their sanctuary at the west end and their entrance at the east; it is possible that the explanation lies, not in Constantine's adherence to the sun-cult, but in the influence of the Old Testament, since the Temple is orientated with its entrance on the east and the Holy of Holies at the west.

² Lest any who strongly uphold the priesthood of all believers should feel complacent, they are reminded of the late Professor Manson's acute remark that this could mean 'the priesthood of no believers whatsoever' or 'the non-priesthood of all believers' (*Ministry and Priesthood*, 1958, p.40).

TODAY'S DOUBT AND UNBELIEF

J. Duncan Percy

II. HOW IS GOD KNOWN?

(Concluded from previous issue)

I BELIEVE IN God the Father Almighty.' But is there a God? In his *Christian Doctrine*, Dr J. S. Whale answers: 'Apparently not. God is not apparent to our senses'. But there are thinkers who limit the notion of 'existence' to finite objects in time and space, objects apparent to the senses, like chairs and tables. Of such a thinker Professor H. J. Paton says: 'He has made it impossible for himself to say significantly that God exists . . . but he has not even contradicted, much less disproved the theological assertion that God exists; for no reputable theologian would affirm that God exists as a "finite object in space and time".'

But Dr Whale continues: 'Nor is God indubitably apparent to human reason.' I think it should be frankly admitted that this is so. The claim that God's existence can be established by reason alone is refuted by the fact that there are and have been many honest and intelligent unbelievers. A proof of reason would leave no room for doubt; it would compel the assent of all minds capable of understanding it, just as a mathematical demonstration does. It is clear that the traditional arguments of natural theology (the ontological argument—that the conception of a Perfect Being necessarily includes His existence, the Cosmological or First Cause argument, and the argument from apparent marks of Design in man and nature), impressive as they are, do not possess this cogency; they are at best inconclusive. It would carry us too far to enter here into the abstruse questions raised by these arguments and their criticism; they are discussed in many easily accessible books. (If certain arguments were shown to be invalid, this, of course, would in no way prove that God does not exist.) It is more to the purpose to say that even if valid and cogent, these arguments would not meet religious needs. A First Cause, or Ground of being, a world Architect or Builder—none of these amounts to the God of religion—the Living and true God, who 'exercises loving kindness, judgement, and righteousness in the earth', to whom we are accountable, whom we can worship and love and serve, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. One recalls Pascal's ecstatic cry: 'God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, not of the philosophers and the men of science. Certainty! Joy!'

In saying that the arguments of natural theology are inconclusive, and that they do not satisfy religious needs, I do not intend to suggest that they are worthless, and that the labour of those who devised them—of great thinkers like Anselm and Thomas Aquinas—was in vain. I do not hold with Karl Barth that human reason is utterly corrupt, and that there can be no such thing as natural theology or philosophy of religion. On the contrary, I believe that the traditional arguments contain precious insights: they help to define and to give content to, our conception of God; and in so doing they give meaning to the sense of the infinite which is present in our awareness of human finitude. But it is important to remember that these arguments were devised by men who were

already sure of God; their faith came first; the arguments were after-thoughts. Thus Anselm, who developed the ontological argument, describes his work as *fides quaerens intellectum* (faith seeking understanding) and he said, *Credo ut intelligam* (I believe in order that I may understand).

In his fine book, *Our Knowledge of God*—to which this article is heavily in debt—Dr John Baillie maintains that our knowledge of God is not inferential, not the conclusion of an argument, and that there is a certain impropriety in attempts to *prove* the existence of God, since they all start from a possible atheism, a God who is not yet. I am sure that he is right in this. A God whose existence had to be proved before we could believe in Him would be less certain, not more certain, than the God of Christian faith and experience.

To the Bible writers the greatest of all certainties was the living God; this was the presupposition of all their thought and utterance. It could not have occurred to them to argue about His existence. When psalmist and prophet pointed to the great features of Nature, it was not in order to prove God to be their Creator; it was in order to remind Israel of the power, the majesty and glory of the God in whom they believed. 'He healeth the broken in heart and bindeth up their wounds. He telleth the number of the stars', says the psalmist, and Percy Ainsworth's unforgettable comment was: 'God could not minister to strained hearts if the stars were too much for Him.' To the exiles on the vast Babylonian plain the prophet said: 'Lift up your eyes on high, and see who hath created these, that bringeth out their host by number; he calleth them all by name; . . . for that he is strong in power, not one is lacking.' G. A. Smith finely comments:

It is not proofs to doubting minds which he offers: it is spiritual nourishment to hungry souls. These are not arguments—they are sacraments. When we Christians go to the Lord's Supper we do not go to have the Lord proved to us; but to feed upon a life and love of whose existence we are past all doubt. . . . Now very much what the Lord's Supper is to us for fellowship with God and feeding upon Him, that were the glory of the heavens, and the everlasting hills, and the depth of sea, and the vision of the stars to the Hebrews. They were the Sacraments of God.

It is not only in religion that we start from presuppositions, from unproved assumptions which we must accept by faith. In his book *Science and Christian Belief*, Professor C. A. Coulson deals with the common notion that science is to be accepted and religion rejected on the ground that while science has no pre-suppositions, religion is overloaded with them.

This is wholly wrong (says Professor Coulson). Science is full of pre-suppositions . . . such as to carry science into the realm of religion. For that common search for a common truth: that unexamined belief that facts are correlated; i.e. stand in relation to one another and cohere in a scheme; that unprovable assumption that there is "an order and constancy in Nature", without which the patient effort of the scientist would be only so much incoherent babbling . . . all of it is a legacy from religious conviction.

Professor Coulson quotes a striking passage to the same effect from the opening chapter of A. N. Whitehead's *Science and the Modern World*. After pointing

out the debt of modern science to the schoolmen of the Middle Ages, with their sense of order in things and their habit of exact thought, Whitehead says:

I do not think, however, that I have even yet brought out the greatest contribution of medievalism to the formation of the scientific movement. I mean the inexpugnable belief that every detailed occurrence can be correlated with its antecedents in a perfectly definite manner, exemplifying general principles. Without this belief the incredible labours of scientists would be without hope. It is this instinctive conviction, vividly poised before the imagination, which is the motive power of research:—that there is a secret, a secret which can be unveiled. How has this conviction been so vividly implanted in the European mind? . . . It must come from the medieval insistence on the rationality of God.

Common sense, no less than religion and science, has its unproved assumptions and among them are basic certainties—the certainties, e.g., that I myself exist, and that there is an external world, with other selves or persons in it. All these are unproved and, perhaps, unprovable. We do not need an argument like Descartes' famous *Cogito, ergo sum*—I think, therefore, I am—to assure us of our own existence. We are directly aware of ourselves as persons. We are also directly aware of a not-self, the external world, though its existence is held to be an illusion by the subjective idealist. As regards other selves, many thinkers from Berkeley onwards have said that we are directly aware only of other bodies which behave like our own, and that we infer by analogy that these bodies are probably indwelt by minds like our own. Such an argument is surely quite unnecessary. Self-consciousness is socially conditioned; there could be no 'I' without a 'thou', no consciousness of self without awareness of other selves. We know immediately that other persons exist. But when it is a question of *what* is in their minds, the context of their thinking and feeling, our way of knowing is, in part, inferential. We read thoughts, feelings and desires of others from bodily signs—in their looks, gestures, outward behaviour, and above all, their speech. Nevertheless, I believe that we often come to know what others are thinking and feeling more directly, more intuitively, than by way of inference from bodily signs. It may be difficult to justify this belief to the sceptic, but I find some support for it in Professor Ayer's *The Problem of Knowledge*. Professor Ayer says: 'We can give a sense to saying that one person inspects or "directly observes" the private experiences of another. He may be said to do so just in those cases where he knows what experiences the other person is having, and does not come to know it through any process of inference.' In the intimacies of friendship and love there is surely often such direct observation of the inner states the one of the other. Dr Baillie quotes a passage from Cook Wilson's *Statement and Inference* which ends with the words: 'We don't want merely inferred friends. Could we possibly be satisfied with an inferred God?'

If God is not inferred, how then is He known? Can we be truly said to know Him at all? Are we not restricted to faith, and to faith as something inferior to knowledge, as in the timid words of the Victorian poet:

*We have but faith, we cannot know,
For knowledge is of things we see.*

Two things are to be said here. The first is that the word 'know' is highly

ambiguous. We commonly speak of 'knowing' in at least three senses: 'knowing that' (the state of affairs is such and such—factual knowledge), 'knowing how' (to do—of skills and aptitudes), and 'knowing him or her' (of personal acquaintance). The second thing to be said is that though faith is not itself knowledge, it leads to knowledge in this last sense—knowledge of a personal Presence. For faith is our response—a divinely inspired response—to the self-disclosure of God in Christ. And the findings of faith are verified in Christian experience. It needs to be said with emphasis that Christian experience is not a state of feeling merely; it is cognitive, a unique kind of awareness, an encounter in which the reality of God is known. 'The witness of all true religion'

[says Dr Baillie], is that there is no reality which more directly confronts us than the reality of God. No other reality is nearer to us than He. The realities of sense are more obvious, but His is the more intimate, touching us as it does so much nearer to the core of our being. God's approach to us in Christ is the closest approach that is ever made to the inmost citadel of our souls.

Faith apprehends this Reality, this Presence, dimly, perhaps, at first, but there is the certainty of knowledge when faith is perfected in the life of obedience and commitment. 'I know whom I have believed', says Paul. He does not say: 'I know *that*'; he says: 'I know *whom*'; it is the knowledge of personal acquaintance. Paul goes on: 'I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him'; Paul had committed his life, his soul, his all, to Christ. If he had withheld that commitment, could he have said with such assurance, 'I know'? Some kinds of knowledge only come through commitment. Is not much of our uncertainty and dissatisfaction in religion due to the half-faith which stops short of obedience and full commitment? 'I don't want to put my hand out any farther than I can pull it back again', said a young man to Canon Peter Green. But life has no meaning for us—we are only spectators—until we take a definite stand, entering upon engagements, promises, and obligations. The enlisted soldier is committed to a life in which he must face certain hazards in the service of his country. True marriage means a definite commitment on both sides, 'for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health', and those who are unwilling so to commit themselves cannot know what marriage really is. It is not otherwise in religion. The prayer of dedication in the old form of the Methodist Covenant Service had some poignant words which express perfectly the total commitment of the self to Christ on which there can be no going back—'If I perish, I perish on Thy shoulder; if I sink I sink in Thy vessel; if I die, I die at Thy door'.

Let no one suppose that such commitment means a blinkered life of narrow views and interests. Those who make a god of fashion, or pleasure, or money, or a motor-car are the really narrow or small-minded, for their god is so pitifully small. Knowledge of the true God means enlargement and liberty; it means that the world belongs to you in a richer, deeper sense than it belongs to those who never look beyond it.

You never enjoy the world aright (said Thomas Traherne) till the sea itself floweth in your veins, till you are clothed with the heavens, and crowned with the stars: and perceive your self to be the sole heir of the world, and more than so, because men are

in it who are every one sole heirs as well as you. Till you can sing and rejoice and delight in God, as misers do in gold, and kings in sceptres, you never enjoy the world.

In his latest book, *The Idea of Revelation in Recent Thought*, Dr Baillie remarks that in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds we do not say, 'I believe that', but 'I believe in'. He says: 'What we are explicitly doing is not therefore affirming the truth of theological propositions, but confessing our trust in God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.' Again, then:

*I bind unto myself the Name,
The strong Name of the Trinity,
By invocation of the same,
The Three in One, and One in Three,
Of whom all nature hath creation,
Eternal Father, Spirit, Word.
Praise to the Lord of my salvation:
Salvation is of Christ the Lord.*

THE MILLENARY PREACHERS, 1645-7

Brian G. Cooper

ONE OF THE most fascinating and illuminating aspects of mid-seventeenth-century Puritanism was its strong interest in apocalyptic. The famous case of James Nayler, the Quaker leader who made a messianic-type entry into Bristol, was not an isolated one, and the revolutionary anti-Cromwellian Fifth Monarchist party was not alone in expecting the imminent establishment of the Kingdom of the Saints on earth.

This chiliastic expectancy had many facets. Some awaited Christ's visible descent from the clouds, the prelude to His rule, with the prophets and martyrs and the living true believers of the current age, over the wicked and unrighteous with a rod of iron. Others held that this desirable state of affairs could only be initiated by the action of the faithful here on earth—by force of arms if necessary. (Hence the appeal of those militaristic visionaries of the Millennium, the Fifth Monarchy Men.) On the other hand, there were those who abhorred the thought of violence, and looked to spiritual and peaceful means to usher in the new age. (It is noteworthy that much of the writing of Gerrard Winstanley, who, as the leader of the Diggers, is generally regarded as a forerunner of modern exponents of common ownership, is shot through with this 'spiritual apocalyptic'.) Yet again, some believed there would arise a prophetic figure, who, acting the role of a second John the Baptist, would prepare the way for the coming dawn of the Millennium. Finally, there were those whose thoughts and aspirations centred on a coming great new outpouring of God's Spirit upon His people; for such, the New Jerusalem was visualized as a totally unprecedented religious situation and experience, in which the imparting of a new spiritual

dimension would revolutionize life completely. This last outlook—'Manifestarianism', as contemporaries called it—frequently overlapped with the others; much of the success of George Fox's appeal lay in the fact that he was widely regarded both as the expected prophetic figure and as bringing the new spiritual outpouring. In fact, of course, all these movements, groups and attitudes intermingled and cross-fertilized to a bewildering degree, and precise definitions are fraught with difficulty. Yet the existence of this visionary religious expectancy, frequently expressed in some form of apocalyptic and millenary terminology, is an unmistakable part of the Puritanism of the 1640s to 1660s.

While the lack of full evidence makes any proper assessment of the actual strength of this feeling almost impossible, the pamphlet literature and other records of the time do give certain occasional glimpses of the millenary preachers and apocalyptic visionaries at work. I want to consider the incidents that occurred in the years 1645-7, to put them in their setting, and to see whether they reveal facets of mid-seventeenth-century Puritan religion to which sufficient weight has not usually been given.

The background was the disturbed England of the Civil War. The breakdown of the political system and the struggle to establish a new one, social and economic distress due to slump and the dislocation of the war, the involvement of the common people in the military and constitutional maelstrom—these are all essential factors to be recognized in evaluating the religion of the time. Above all, the Church in England was in fragments; episcopacy was being abolished wherever the armies of Parliament were victorious, the Westminster Assembly was busy formulating a Presbyterian settlement, and in the chaos of the wartime situation the organs of discipline and censorship had halted and a *de facto* religious liberty prevailed. All forms of Independency flourished, especially in the regiments of Oliver Cromwell. Among the new forms of religious expression was millenarism, the belief that Christ would soon return to claim His own and would reign 1,000 years on earth with the Saints. Nourished by the turbulent conditions of the time, this notion was given coherent formulation in the academic treatises of men like Brightman, Alsted, and Mede, on sale in the bookshops of London during the 1640s. As the New Model cavalry gave triumph to the cause of Parliament at Marston Moor and Naseby, the stage seemed set for an utterly new era in England, for no one knew what the future held. The preachers of the New Jerusalem gave an answer.

Pagitt, writing in 1645,¹ lamented the appearance of the Millenaries and their message 'that before the day of judgement Christ shall come down from heaven, and reign with the Saints upon earth 1,000 years, in which time they shall destroy all the wicked, binding their Kings in chains, and Nobles in links of iron'. Chiliasm, too, Pagitt reckoned among the heresies of the Anabaptists, warning his readers that they aimed at repeating the excesses of Munster in England. Regarding Millenaries and Anabaptists alike as both doctrinally in error, and socially subversive, Pagitt called for them to be ruthlessly suppressed. However, partisanship distorted his sense of proportion, and anyway, he cited no specific examples of the movement he was condemning, writing in only general terms.

Thomas Edwards, the first edition of whose catalogue of heresies—the

Gangraena—appeared early in 1646, also castigated the Millenaries in general terms, but provided some instances of the kind of activities he had in mind.² A group of Independents in London in 1645 were proclaiming that a prophetic figure had appeared in Suffolk, the unnamed 'that prophet' mentioned in John 1²¹, 28. He was awaiting a 'vocal call from Heaven' before beginning his preaching, a call which was expected—by both the prophet himself and his following—to come very quickly. We know nothing more of this prophetic figure; but the fact that the news of his existence and activities had reached London shows there were some people willing to give a hearing to such self-styled forerunners of an approaching messianic advent.

Even more illuminating is the millenary group that emerged at Colchester during the early summer of 1645. In mid-July 1645 a correspondent of Edwards informed him that a number of Independents there believed the Day of Judgement was imminent; some named the next winter as the appointed time. They regarded Jerusalem as the most propitious place for the coming cataclysm; there was still time to journey thither, and accordingly some of the Colchester group made their way to London as the first stage of their apocalyptic pilgrimage. The names of the Colchester group are not recorded, and this may be all that can be said about them with certainty. On the other hand, the enlarged version of the first edition of Edward's *Gangraena*, which appeared later in 1646, mentioned similar activities in London. By February 1646 a prophetic figure had appeared in London, preaching pilgrimage to Jerusalem to repair the city of God. Although this preacher is unnamed, it is likely he was the leader of the group from Colchester. Yet even if not, the utterance at Colchester and London was the same: the time of the divine intervention in human affairs is at hand, and the faithful must go to Jerusalem to meet the Lord and Judge. A certain Mrs Attaway and a William Jenney were the focus of these chiliastic commotions in England's capital in 1646. Mrs Attaway, a lace-seller in Cheapside, abandoned her family responsibilities and collected money for the eastbound expedition. Her influence over Jenney was remarkable. On the strength of some letters from the original prophet of imminent catastrophe and the need to go to Jerusalem, Attaway persuaded Jenney that if they journeyed thither and started reconstructing the ancient city, the Second Advent of Christ and the appearance of the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob would be precipitated. Attaway and Jenney both firmly declared they would never die, but live for ever in the new kingdom set up on earth at Jerusalem.

We do not know their fate, or even if they ever in fact set sail for the east, but the actual outcome of these millenary stirrings in London in 1646 does not have to be known for our present purpose. The mere fact that such a group as that around Attaway and Jenney existed at all, that it was seriously collecting money for the last 'crusade' to the Holy Land, and that its members threw aside their family ties, is sufficiently illustrative of the appeal of apocalyptic preaching to some at this time. Behind both Jenney and Attaway there lurks the mysterious figure of the preacher whose passionate conviction, communicated successfully to a few, had caused even wider alarm. Perhaps he was in prison—he is described as 'shut up for a time'—but it was fervently held by his devoted followers that at the end of the summer of 1646 he would 'come forth with power to preach the general Restoration of all things'.

This unknown preacher, Mrs Attaway and William Jenney were not the only ones who breathed the heady atmosphere of chiliastic expectancy in 1646. It is not without significance that William Franklin, the notorious pseudo-messiah of London and Andover in 1650, saw his earliest visions and for the first time proclaimed himself the Christ while living at Stepney, London, in 1646. Some of the Manifestarians at this time were declaring they had seen Christ in the flesh, and that the rule of the saints was not to be confined to the spiritual kingdom of the Church, but embraced an earthly kingdom of temporal power, which they identified as beginning in England itself. Similar tenets were expounded by Thomas Collier, a fanatical Anabaptist preacher in the West of England, whose turbulent unorthodoxy had led to his imprisonment for a time at Portsmouth, and made him the focus of Presbyterian abuse and Independent enthusiasm during 1645 and 1646. In his *Certain Queries*, published in 1645, Collier had called upon Parliament to dismiss the Westminster Assembly, to subdue the Antichrist wherever it held power (the implied ruthless prosecution of the war against the King and the purging of those from Parliament who would treat with him, Collier saw as a necessary apocalyptic 'desolation'), and to commit the government of the nation to the saints. Parliament, naturally enough, ignored his appeal. By June 1646, Collier was himself in London, preaching both religious separatism and a political form of chiliasm.

At a time when England's constitutional future was highly uncertain, Collier's solution was simple: the abolition of monarchy, Parliament and judges, and the setting-up of the rule of the saints. Parliament could either co-operate in the divinely-ordained historical process and hand over power voluntarily, or could resist and be forcibly overthrown, but, whatever the method, Collier was in no doubt about the outcome. The victory of the New Model Army in the Civil War he believed to be the fulfilment of the prophecy in Daniel 7²⁷, of which the inevitable corollary was the giving of 'the Kingdom to the Saints'. Such was the theme of Collier's preaching in London in the summer of 1646. 'Whether it be the Lord Jesus immediately, or Jesus by a Parliament, I shall not much dispute . . . only thus much take notice, that by the Kingdom is not only meant an external Kingdom, for the Saints shall possess that, but the spiritual Kingdom and Government of the Church of Christ.' The establishment of an Independent theocracy and a revitalized Church polity were to go hand in hand.

Others, also, were making messianic pretensions or preaching the imminence of the Millennium. At a meeting of sectaries in London in the early summer of 1646, one of the company asserted he was the messiah. Philip Tandy, a leading Independent in Yorkshire and other parts of the north, read the Book of Revelation and became convinced that Christ would visibly appear 'within these very few years'. William Bowling, of Cranbrook, Kent, who had previously been hauled before the Committee of Examination at Aylesford for his heretical preaching, arrived in London from Gravesend in July 1646. Among his doctrines was that of the 1,000 years' reign of Christ on earth with the saints, a notion that he proclaimed along with the abolition of tithes and the dismissal of the Westminster Assembly, two main planks in the current Independent platform.

Early in the next year, in March 1647, another wandering millenary preacher arrived in the capital. William Sedgwick,³ who had journeyed thither from the Isle of Ely, caused a great stir by his utterances that the world would end within

a fortnight with the coming of Christ to Judgement. His message, which he claimed to have received in a vision of Christ while at his study at Ely, divided public opinion in London: 'some say he is mad, some that he talks very sensibly'. Certainly his presence could not be ignored. It is noteworthy that Mary Gadbury, who assumed the role of 'the Bride of Christ' at Andover in 1649-50 when William Franklin proclaimed himself the Messiah, was living in London in 1647 and regularly heard Sedgwick's preaching.⁴

It is quite clear that from 1645 to 1647, and particularly in 1646, London provided a ready public for apocalyptic utterances and messianic pretensions. Provincial preachers from Suffolk, Essex, the West Country, Yorkshire and Kent, all converged on the capital city to give voice to their own special brand of chiliastic expectancy. For the sectaries, these years were a time of acute uncertainty and apprehension; the exhilaration of victory over the Royalists was tempered with the fear of Presbyterian religious repression. The use of the Independent New Model Army under Cromwell to achieve liberty for the sectaries and a new constitution by force was a drastic, yet perhaps inevitable, solution only gradually achieved. In the lull before active political assertion, millenary notions had a strong appeal.

Within thirteen months we have nine recorded instances of some form of chiliasm. Their diversity is illuminating; there was no organized, single millenary movement adhering to the set tenets of an apocalyptic creed. The imminent Second Coming, the need for pilgrimage towards Jerusalem, the 1,000 years' reign of the saints, action by Parliament to usher in their Kingdom—all these were advocated, all had their devotees, all came to nothing. In addition, some individuals put themselves forward as figures prophetic of the dawning new age, others declared themselves the very embodiment of messianic purpose. The millenary feeling of 1645-7 was diffuse and uncoordinated. In this respect it was like almost every other aspect of the religious situation at the time; Edwards, for example, compiled a list of 176 errors, and, allowing for his zeal of compilation, it cannot be denied that London particularly was a veritable Sargasso Sea of the sects. The Millenaries, themselves divided, jostled with the Antinomians, Anabaptists, Libertines, Familists, Seekers, Perfectists, Manifestarians, and many others. All overlapped and intermingled in a confusing and bewildering fashion, with few hard-and-fast demarcations—hence the ability of the latest preacher with the newest notion to gather a ready and sizeable, if somewhat evanescent, following.

Apocalyptic was one of the many elements comprising the Puritanism of the Independents in the mid-seventeenth century. It was the inevitable product of their preoccupation with biblical literalism in a period of unprecedented religious liberty, at a time of upheaval in every aspect of the nation's life. The millenary prophets, preachers and pretenders of 1645-7 were not simply the by-products of this situation of catastrophe. Paradoxically enough, they represent both an attempt to escape from the situation into a fantasy world of apocalyptic visions and divine intervention, and a sincere profession of belief that the latter was not only the desirable solution but also would actually happen in the very near future.

The millenary preachers of 1645-7 provide us thus with fascinating insights into the religious climate of their time. They were also part of a longer tradition

of popular millenarism that stretched back into the Middle Ages, and immediately forward into the 1650s, with Franklin, Nayler and the Fifth Monarchy Men. In our own day, it continues among the heretical sects and weird minority movements.

¹ E. Pagitt, *Heresiography*, 1645.

² Thomas Edwards, *Gangraena*; four editions appeared in 1646.

³ See *Clarke Papers*, Vol. I, p.4 (30th March 1647).

⁴ For Franklin and Gadbury, see *Pseudo Christus*, 1650.

THE THEATRE TODAY AND ITS RELATION TO CHRISTIAN THINKING

Kay M. Baxter

I

PLEASANT ENOUGH, the study of contemporary drama, for those who have time for such ploys; but, surely it is an exaggeration to claim that through a study of today's drama men can gain fresh understanding of the Christian faith or new insights into the spiritual needs of the world in 1960?

In the following pages we shall try to show that a study of twentieth-century drama has relevance to such an understanding. The dramatist of today is wrestling with many of the theologian's problems, and agreement as well as divergences can provide growing-points of understanding which deserve and demand our attention.

It will be necessary, as briefly as possible, to summarize developments in the theatre which led to our present situation and to examine the part played by the dramatists in the great changes of attitude towards religion we have seen taking place in the first half of our century. To do this properly would take several books; all that can here be attempted is to set up a few signposts and establish a few Aunt Sallies in the hope that others will pursue the subject further, to the advantage of both Church and Drama.

William Temple, in his noble Readings of St John, writing of his own concern to discover what the Holy Spirit was saying to him through the Gospel, emphasizes that all study of the printed word of Scripture helps us to receive the living Word of God. But, Temple points out, 'Christ wrote no book'; and St John, he adds, 'does not argue from premises to conclusion as a method of apprehending truth. Rather he puts together the constituent parts of truth and contemplates them in their relation to each other. It is the method of artistic as distinct from scientific apprehension.' The Gospel according to St John has probably always been the Evangel of the artist because it follows this method of apprehending truth; the record persuades through its delineation of deed and motive; it is through pondering the record that hearts are touched and minds illuminated.

To contemplate the 'constituent parts of truth in their relation to each other'

—is not this precisely what our serious dramatists spend their working lives in trying to do? In a world more and more drowned in torrents of verbiage, the dramatist, whose medium must always be that of action and reaction, is committed to making his record through the delineation of deed and motive. 'Judged by their words', says Molière, 'all men are the same; it is their deeds that unmask their differences.' For Christians, the one Deed which sums the 'constituent parts of truth', the Deed which unmasks all our differences, is the eternal Deed of the Incarnation, that fact in whose shade all our lives are lived. The Incarnation has to be contemplated afresh by each generation in its own setting, through the medium of its own metaphors and symbols, against the background of its own assumptions. In a civilization shot through with Christian symbolism as ours is, the Puritan banishment of the theatre from the Christian hearth cut the dramatist off from the traditional source of his understanding of man's nature and destiny, and deprived him of modes of expression for which he has been unable to find substitutes. Rejected, one defends oneself by rejecting; and the Church's rejection of the theatre has been countered by the theatre's rejection of the Church, to their mutual impoverishment. Nevertheless, during the last half century the dramatist seems to have been drawn irresistibly to re-examine the Christian faith and its relation to the motivation of conduct, and to comment (often ironically, sometimes antagonistically) on the behaviour of Christians.

Meanwhile the playgoers are turning for the models on which to base their behaviour to the figures of stage, screen and television. The preacher may, if you happen to *be* in Church, speak home about your duty, and may adduce many an apt example, drawn from life to point his moral. But, poor fellow, what chance does he stand, up there in the pulpit, urging us to be what we have little taste for becoming, when later in the day we can rapturously identify ourselves with the lives, loves and heroics of glamorous highly paid stars trained in every one of the arts of seduction and charm. 'Selling the dream life' has now reached the status of a profession and few preachers have the rhetoric to oppose, under the banner of truth, the massed forces of popular press and film and television. Would it not seem worthwhile for the churchpeople to demand that those who set out to present the truths upon which our eternal life depends should be those whose training and gifts both qualify them to present these truths with the maximum of power? And to present them through the medium not of words only, but of things done? And where are we more likely to find people with these gifts and this training than among the playwrights who daily wrestle with the delineation of deed and motive?

The prime concern of the best of the playgoing public, is the same as the prime concern of the best of the serious playwrights—namely, 'What is man?' and 'How should he behave?' If we are Christians we may ask our question in Christian terms, 'How does man, made in the image of a Trinitarian God, live in right relationship?' or 'How does man, participant in the Incarnation, hallow God's name in his everyday work?' But however we word it, all of us are confronted with the same basic enquiry—'Who are we? What are we called to become? Where do we find the courage to *be*?'

We must now set out on a brief account of the principal writers who have forwarded the return of the drama to its true role of illuminator, and must try

to gain some rough idea of the steps by which the drama has reached its present situation.

It was Goethe who first in our age used poetic drama for serious treatment of a legendary theme; he reached the conclusion that the true destiny of man was service to his kind. After him Ibsen came, using the theatre to explore man's duty to his society and to his God; and concluding (as the avalanche thunders down at the end of *Brand*) that duty was not enough, and that the name of the power that governs man and avalanche was Love. The English stage then produced the Irish Shaw, who expressed in comedic form the view that the evolutionary process was wholly within man's power to achieve, and who forced any Christians who read prefaces or plays to re-examine their shallowly held beliefs with less complacency. Finally appeared the Frenchman Paul Claudel, combining a classical erudition with a religious commitment to present upon the French stage the full Christian doctrine of Grace and Redemption. Each of these men played a part in bringing back to the theatre serious and passionate expression of man's need to understand what Temple calls 'the utterance of the Divine Word to the soul'.

Meanwhile, other forces were at work providing new tools for the enquiry into the question, 'What is Man?' Frazer's *Golden Bough* and Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* were important landmarks in the developing sciences of anthropology and psychology. These were to present starkly the queries, first, 'Are there divine imperatives?' and second, 'Has man any personal responsibility at all?'

The tremendous intellectual excitement generated by the striding thought of the new sciences captured popular attention. To set against them the gentle piety and kindness of plays such as Rann Kennedy's *Servant in the House*, or Jerome K. Jerome's *Passing of the Third Floor Back*, was like matching bow and arrow against an I.C.B.M. The successful playwrights were not writing upon religious themes at all.

Apart from one revival (by William Poel in 1909) of the medieval morality *Everyman*, there was no play shown on the stage which had any trace of theological grounding whatever, until well after World War One. True, in 1914 Shaw produced *Androcles*, with its searing attack on pseudo-Christians, and followed it up three years later with *St Joan*, but, great entertainment though these plays provide, neither stems from a real concern with the problem of man's relation to God. Both are concerned to point out the failure of Christians to live up to their profession. This is a matter which at the present moment none of us would find particularly dramatic, so convinced are we of the truth of the indictment. Poel was prosecuted for presenting the figure of God on a public stage contrary to the law of the land; under the lengthening shadow of the threat of war no one else was prepared to devote himself to a further attempt at presenting any of the other medieval enquiries into man's destiny.

After World War One the drama of the 'twenties reacted to a quite new set of circumstances. The dearth of material goods in war-ravaged Europe necessitated economy; defeat, revolution and poverty called for a different kind of recreation from that offered by the pre-war theatre. The Capek brothers in Czechoslovakia, Ernst Toller the Communist leader in Germany, Elmer Rice in the U.S., showed men as creatures without meaning or dignity—the ant and

the mayfly. The general impression is that *an* end is about the best that man can hope for. 'Let's Finis scrawl, and then the book put by.' Lawrence of Arabia, returned to this country, was at this time heard to enquire, 'Isn't it time *Homo sapiens* shut down?' In Toller's *Masses and Men*, a violent and terrible play was accepted, and the word *schuldig* (guilty) echoed unchallenged in the filled theatre, by an audience anxious to be assured that others shared their own preoccupation with guilt feelings towards their fellow men. It is an urgent question of our time to understand the temperament which seeks to propitiate its own Eumenides by communal ritual purgation of this kind. The temperament is still among us, and not only in Germany; but to this we shall refer later. At this point it is enough to say that, in the first quarter of the century playwrights were concerned with man's efforts to put himself right with man, in a world from which God was dethroned.

In plays of the Expressionist theatre such as those mentioned above, the chief emphasis was on audience participation, on the attempt to identify spectator with spectacle. Max Reinhart, the great experimental producer of the German-speaking theatre, wanted to use 'Circus theatre'—'theatre in the round' as we should call it today—in order, he said, to 'Release emotions simple and primitive but great and powerful as becomes the human race'. He could hardly have known how he was preparing his people for the Nuremberg Rallies and opening the way for the appalling mob-response to mob-stimuli, the recollection of which still chills the soul of those of us old enough to remember them. The Arch-producer was still in the wings, conning the script for the mass-manipulation of the huge yearning audiences all too soon to be at his disposal. There are few more sadly illuminating experiences than to read Macgowan and Jones's book, *Continental Stagecraft*, published in 1923, and compare their optimistic delight in what they then saw of European drama with the horrors that followed that period. Such a comparison throws considerable light on the way in which a pseudo-religious attitude towards the drama can help to deliver a community over to the devil; and it indicates vividly some of the dangers inherent in the medium.

Not for the first time, English moderation—English stodginess if you prefer to call it so—prevented the hysteria which grew into Hitler's Rallies and the liturgical blasphemies perpetrated by the pseudo-priests of racial purity. We owed, too, much to a bastion of defence that the continent of Europe lacked. We had, as they had not, an unbroken stream of poetic dramatists who had continued to experiment (notably at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, but also in the London Little Theatres and in the Birmingham and Manchester Repertories) with ideas and forms which had little to do with 'Expressionismus'. Yeats, Bottomley, Drinkwater, Bridie, Synge and other less-known names had been steadily building an audience of discrimination as well as training actors to perform plays poetic in content, if not always verse-plays. The root of this new poetic drama was not the whipping up of mob-emotion, nor any false exaltation, nor a concern with immediate social problems. The social problem play did indeed have its exponents (Shaw, Galsworthy), but it was the poets, with their insistence that audiences must bring their minds as well as their emotions to the theatre, who really held the English drama on its course. And the substance of this serious drama was a genuine concern with questions such as

'What is compassion? What is supernatural courage? What is keeping faith with God?'—a concern, that is, with questions which have traditionally exercised the minds of religious thinkers. At the time of their production they held their audiences. Yet looked at now, one is aware of a lack of power through the whole range of plays. Why is this? What explains the tentative note? It seems at least probable that it was due to the estrangement between drama and organized religious faith.

These reflections began with the assumption that it was the function of the artist or writer to 'put together the constituent parts of truth and contemplate them in their relation to each other'. We noted that the Puritan ban on the theatre cut the dramatist off from those religious sources which had traditionally guided and supported his thinking about man's nature and destiny. To the theatre the whole religious dimension had become forbidden territory. Conscious that his medium was rejected by the Church, the serious dramatist gave a wide berth to the whole subject of the relation between God and man, while the popular stage contented itself with making the pale young curate a stock figure of fun. Yet, in the nineteen-twenties, man (even the English man) was still a religious animal, and to disregard this fact meant that the writer had to write at surface level about problems whose proper treatment involved depth study. Hence the thinness and brittleness which we detect in the plays of this period when we read them in the light of what has happened since then.

The outstanding event which marked the turning of the tide took place in 1928, when the late Bishop Bell, then Dean of Canterbury, commissioned for performance in the Cathedral a play entitled *The Coming of Christ*, by the poet John Masefield. Here, and in the series of plays which followed, a new movement in the history of English drama came to birth.

Many factors contributed to this development. Three in particular must be mentioned. First, the activities of Reinhart in Europe had proved that the conventional auditorium with proscenium arch was not the only place where genuine theatrical work could be presented. Second, a body of professional actors and actresses existed capable of the considerable technical adjustments needed in order to project a verse play in a huge ecclesiastical building to an audience which was also a congregation. These players had trained in many different fields: some had worked in the Repertories supported by men of wealth and taste such as Sir Barry Jackson, under the tutelage of such zealots for sincerity of interpretation as H. K. Aylliff, the producer of most of the Malvern Festival seasons; others had learned the art of verse speaking in membership of the Poetry Society; others were already beginning to work with the infant Religious Drama Society. And there was, moreover, a small but enthusiastic band of followers of these men and women, who were willing to travel to Canterbury to make an informed and sympathetic audience for such a venture. Thirdly, and lastly, there had appeared at the right moment a man of the calibre and authority of George Bell to gather round him artists of such standing that what they had to say was bound to gain a hearing—a man, moreover, of such generous courage that he did not demand of the writers he commissioned a narrow orthodoxy, but was prepared to let the artist juxtapose the 'constituent parts of truth' according to the dictates of his own inspiration, let the chips fall where they might. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral*, Sayers's *Zeal of thy House*,

to name only two of the plays, were the fruit of the daring trust a great churchman reposed in the writers he asked to write for him.

The commercial theatre was naturally slow to risk following the Bishops' lead. It was six years later, in 1934, that John Drinkwater's play *A Man's House* came from the Malvern Festival to London—its theme, the effect upon a first-century Jewish family of the events of Holy Week. True, it was still safely confined within the limits of a 'Costume' play, yet the mere fact of its presentation marks a further stage in the progress of the new movement.

To this period also belong the Time plays of J. B. Priestley, whose sensitive journalist antennae were quick to pick up the most dramatically interesting of the scientific speculations—as put forward in Dunne's book *Experiment with Time*. Linking the idea of Curved Time with Ouspensky's theory of a recurring spiral of life-experience, and rushing the plays on to the West End stage while public interest was just beginning to be aroused, Priestley produced, as one would expect, excellent theatre with confident technical accomplishment.

From the point of view of our present enquiry, however, what is specially noteworthy is that the dramatic criticism of the day did not think it worth mentioning that here was a writer wrestling with the doctrine of Atonement, with the problem of vicarious suffering and with the question of personal resurrection, without any idea that the Christian Faith might have relevance to his theme.

Still more serious, no one in the Church seems to have noticed that here, in Priestley, was a robust, experienced playwright who needed perhaps only a welcome from the right theologian to make him heir to all the riches of Christian insight which the facts of the situation at that time denied him.

This unhappy lack of contact, between people grounded in the Christian Faith and those manœuvring on the frontiers of scientific thought and popular entertainment, accounts in some measure for the next, and unfortunate, development in the new movement—namely, the division among writers into those who followed Mr Eliot into the cathedral to produce plays acceptable to the devout and suited to ecclesiastical buildings, and those who stayed outside, grappling, in doctrinal darkness, with almost all the problems consequent upon the Fall of Man.

Mr Eliot himself was, of course, far too sage to remain underneath the arches. Having got away with *Murder*, he kept silence for the early years of World War Two, but his next play was designed for the theatre, not for the church. Of this, however, more later.

Whichever side we take in the continuing argument over the rightness or wrongness, theologically or aesthetically, of performance of plays in churches, and however strenuously we may object to the content of plays which have gained entry to churches since Masfield wrote *The Coming of Christ*, one thing is certain. From the moment when George Bell opened the doors of Canterbury to the poetic dramatist the writers who worked under his inspiration began the tremendous and essential task of hammering out a language for the drama which should be adequate to handle religious themes, free of timeworn clichés, of over-familiar imagery, of metaphor drawn from a vanished civilization, and free too from the embarrassment of a phraseology scarred from theological battle long forgotten. Eliot has written unforgettably of the cost of this

task, this 'raid on the inarticulate', to those whose concern is speech and who are therefore compelled 'to purify the dialect of the tribe'. And it is a fact which merits our profound thankfulness that our leading poets have been men of Christian conviction willing to incur the labours and face the disappointments inherent in any such attempt to re-state the central tenets of our Faith in terms meaningful to the thoughtful man in the street. Of the post-war development in this struggle we shall speak in the next issue.

(To be continued)

JOHN WESLEY'S LETTERS TO HIS BROTHER

W. F. Lofthouse

PART I

THE LINK that binds the names of John and Charles Wesley together is peculiarly strong. Born and dying within a few years of one another, they lived through almost the whole of the eighteenth century. They were closely in touch with one another throughout, never more so than at the turning points in the lives of each. As is strikingly commemorated by the plaque which bears the likenesses of both in Westminster Abbey, they were rightly held to be the co-founders of Methodism, the community which owes more to its founders than any other of the Free Churches, and which has had and still has closer ties with the Anglican Church than the rest. It is, in fact, impossible to write the life of either of the brothers without writing the life of the other. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that no step taken by either of them could be understood or judged without careful reference to the other. There have been few partnerships so close or so prolonged. Neither in the literary nor the religious world do we find two brothers united for nearly four score years, first in close and absorbing family activities, and then in what each considered to be the dominant and heaven-born concern of his life. Neither Luther nor Calvin, Bernard nor Francis had brothers; apart from the Gospels, we hear nothing of Andrew by the side of Peter, whom he brought to the Master; and one of the sons of thunder was early torn from his brother's side.

This does not mean indeed that their relationship was one of unbroken harmony. They themselves, like all the members of the large Wesley family, gloried in plain speech to each other. The superficial observer is often surprised that those who were so much like each other could be so different, though the psychologist would be prepared to expect that, facing together a succession of fresh problems and forced at every turn to make adventurous decisions, they would, from time to time, move in opposite directions. Sincerity itself may lead to the exaggeration of real or supposed antagonisms; and, further, their intense devotion to a Church which never shrank from tolerating ambiguities and prided itself on its comprehensiveness could easily lead them into misinterpreting its demands and its principles.

It is generally held that the question that came nearest to breaking the alliance of the brothers was: 'Shall we separate from the Church of England?' It is a question which current 'conversations' are doing much to recall at the present moment. Charles is reported to have said that his brother put Methodism before the Church, while he put the Church before Methodism. No one who has studied the prolonged discussion could possibly be satisfied with so crude a contrast. As little can be said of similar remarks made by John, or by biographers who have contented themselves with quotations from letters which passed between the two at crucial times. Nearly 100 letters from John to Charles are printed in Telford's standard edition. Nothing has been attempted on a similar scale for Charles's correspondence. It must be recognized, too, that all John's letters to Charles imply a situation as well known to Charles as to himself; and both moved in a familiar landscape of metaphors, colloquialisms and even jests, the kind of thing practised so amusingly in the Glynn household. To find ourselves at home, indeed, in the letters to Charles, we need to bring to them the knowledge of the two brothers which only the whole body of letters to all John's correspondents can give us.

Satisfactorily to deal with them, we should take seriatim every change, as a musician would say, of key and tempo. This is far beyond the range of the present paper. I must content myself with dividing the letters into two classes: those which impart or request information on matters of interest, personal or family or ecclesiastical or administrative, such as would actually pass between close relatives, and those which deal with tensions, as we may call them—the writer's own religious and ecclesiastical problems, and his personal relations to his brother. We must be prepared for some overlapping, but this happily will cause no confusion. The scope of the correspondence will be all the clearer if the reader bears in mind that the fifty years are divided into four periods: from the so-called conversion in 1738 to John's marriage in 1751, from then to the death of Whitefield in 1770, from Whitefield's death to the deed of Declaration in 1784, and finally for the four years which saw the ordinations for America, Fletcher's death in 1785, Coke's departure for the New World in 1786, and Charles's death in 1788.

Before, however, we examine the special character of these 100 or so letters to Charles and consider what conclusions can be drawn from them, it will be useful to keep in mind certain points which emerge from the mass of letters as a whole. To his preachers his habit was to write as an intimate friend, calling them by playful diminutives—Frankie, Sammy, and the rest. There are only a few with whom he never took this liberty, notably John Fletcher and Thomas Coke; with them it is 'My dear Sir'. He often displayed a detailed knowledge of their circumstances, even their affairs of the heart, and showed a touching solicitude for their comfort; but at the same time he took it for granted that unless they were in Anglican orders, they would go wherever he appointed them, would carry out what he had told them to do without question, and would suffer any rebuke he might be moved to send them. In his unique combination of warmth and autocracy, he never regarded them as colleagues, but always as subordinates: Silas, Timothy and Epaphroditus must do as they are told. To Charles he never gave orders, though he generally expected, hoped, that his suggestions would be implemented.

It may perhaps be remarked that when we consider the letters which John wrote to his women friends, they are most of them, but not all, addressed to 'Peggy' or 'Nancy' or 'Betsy'. His expressions of affection are sometimes surprisingly warm and demanding, but he never writes as the lover; and most of his correspondence, begun after he had been married for ten years and had passed the age of sixty, suggests a combination of father-confessor and elderly relative. His letters to women are seen at their best in those he wrote to his niece, Charles Wesley's daughter Sally. The controversial letters, on the other hand, several of which are printed in Telford's eight volumes, are pamphlets and not letters at all. Their only claim to be considered as letters is that in them John is answering or on occasion launching some personal attack. In his earlier years he could write at length to his father, who died in 1735;¹ to his mother, who died at City Road in 1742,² and his elder brother, Samuel (including translations of three of Horace's Odes), who died in 1739.³ His first printed letter to Charles was written when they were both in Georgia in 1736.⁴ Bristling as it does with Latin and Greek (and that for a good reason), it was as much a model of brevity joined to strong emotion as he achieved later. The fire was always there. John never imagined that it might need stoking.

The territory which he covered in these letters and the adaptability and frankness with which he wrote them certainly entitle him to be held one of the greater letter-writers of literature; but it would be foolish to compare him with Cicero, for example, or St Augustine or Lord Chesterfield or Keats. The one reader he thought of, save in the pamphlets, was the recipient. For literary graces he had neither time nor admiration. True, the letters to the Stanton ladies, Mrs Pendarves and the others, were written at Oxford or in the Oxford atmosphere (we hear no more of them after June 1737) and no stylist of the eighteenth century need have been ashamed of their balanced and polished antitheses. But when the hard labours of evangelism began, and letters awaiting his reply would pile up by the score, it was farewell to the graces. The only source of style which did not run dry was clear expression and intense concentration. Every letter was a prelude to action; and the resulting style has an attraction, if not a charm, of its own. A true son of his age, John would give a reason for every sentiment he expressed; and a careful reader of his nervous and athletic paragraphs will hardly suppress a smile when he finds a clever writer of today talking of John's excitement or enthusiasm, and even suggesting that Methodism was born in hysteria.

Without this brief reference to John's correspondence as a whole (Telford prints about 3,000 letters in all), it would be impossible to see the special colour, as we may call it, of his letters to Charles. They have all the characteristics we have been observing; John is John whenever he takes pen in hand. But these letters have something else which can only be appreciated through their contrast with the rest. Every letter John wrote to Charles over the whole space from the first Georgian letter in 1736 to the last, when Charles lay on his death-bed, shows the intimacy already referred to, which was as far out of the reach of Cicero with his Atticus as of Lord Chesterfield with his son; but long before the great experience of Whitsuntide in 1738 they had learnt to open their hearts to one another as neither could do to anyone else and the lesson, so far from being forgotten, was always being learnt afresh.

As far as John himself is concerned, they come as near as John ever came to an autobiography, a sort of *journal intime*. Naturally, they give us no such hour-to-hour record as we have in the diaries, nor are they written up for publication, as were the *Journals*. But it is in them that he is thinking, or remembering, aloud, or writing to keep up his own spirits as much as his brother's.⁵ For instance, we have some detailed accounts of travels in Germany in 1738, where he went after his conversion to see Count Zinzendorf and his Moravians for himself. He continues while he is in Bristol, sharing Charles's doubts about the legitimacy of 'field preaching', but deciding that if God commands it, God must be obeyed rather than the bishops.⁶

As early as 1741 the *Hymns on God's Everlasting Love* were published, virtually breaking with Whitefield and the 'horrible decrees'. John writes in April of that year describing his 'purging' of the 'bands', his doubts of the Moravians (are they more than laymen?); he warns Charles, rather surprisingly, against receiving Moravian 'poison', and pleads for a mutual love 'without dissimulation'.⁷ In the November of the same year he writes an exceptionally long and full letter, describing a serious illness and its departure; this he also printed in full in his *Journals*.⁸

After the strain of the break with Grace Murray and his subsequent marriage with Mrs Vazeille, to which reference is made later, and the disputes of the following years, he still writes to his brother, 'let us draw the saw no longer',⁹ 'let you and I build up the city of God'; and in June 1766 he tells his brother—he would have told no one else; he did not mention it in his *Journals*—of the strange attack of spiritual despondency and deadness which chilled him, though it could not drive him from his work for a single day.¹⁰ We find the same thing all through the 'sixties; there are constant remonstrances, as if he were never sure of Charles's head, or his heart; but while he struggles in the waves of uncertainty or rebuke, the tides and the current are constant. He sends his brother the kind of information he sends no one else; and if more than once he cries, '*Eia age; rumpe moras*',¹¹ he is quick to add, 'Let us strengthen one another'. Two years later, in 1768, 'we must stand shoulder to shoulder' is followed by '*vir esto*'. He is the brother still; but emphatically the older brother.¹²

A few months later on, he confesses that some reproof of Charles to him was deserved; he breaks off with 'you simpleton', and then talks of Handel and of his wife.¹³ In 1772 he complains of his own indolence, and then 'The good God help us both'.¹⁴ Later in the same year he asks to whom he is to leave the care of his papers at his death; he talks about the payments to his preachers, the medicinal use of warm treacle, and gospel preaching; he relates a curious dream, and adds a pathetic appeal for Charles's support.¹⁵ What could not be done by both of them together?—'*nos consules*',¹⁶ as if they were two Roman magistrates. Publishers, lawsuits, appointments, his varying health are all mentioned, one after another, in the most natural fashion. He was never really frank with anyone else about his health—perhaps not even with himself.

In 1775 begin constant references to America, but far too brief for any real discussion. Did John know that to be needless? And if it is the elder brother who is still speaking when arrangements have to be made, Charles would smile when John writes of a correspondent, 'I will refer him to you', and tells him that 'Fletcher would not be safe without you or me'.¹⁷

In the 'eighties, the old man, nearly eighty himself, writes in the familiar boyish tones: 'the bishop will never meddle with us' and 'your preaching is blest'; 'I know no fault to be found with your answer'. He asks for Cicero and other books.¹⁸ In March 1783, after partial recovery from illness, there is a rare warmth—'dear brother Charles' twice over. 'You', he admits, 'see further than I'.¹⁹ He still looks for news of America. Exhortations follow ('be strong in the Lord'), with news about his own journeys, and he is equally frank on what he has to do and what he cannot alone make up his mind about. He discusses a phrase from Charles's *Epistle* written in the forties, and once more asks, 'What could not we do together?' which waits on 'If you had but kept close to me'. And then he writes of painters, miraculous occurrences, and a portrait of Charles for publication, as he might have written forty years before.

We should be fortunate if we could read Charles's letters to John as we can read John's to Charles. Charles must have chuckled as John made his reader hear his very voice. 'I could play with all these if I could but set Thomas Maxfield right.'²⁰ 'He is *mali caput et fons*; so inimitably wrong-headed, and so absolutely unconvincible. And yet (what is exceeding strange) God continues to bless his labours.' He protests that he does not speak *ex cathedra*. 'I can be as obstinate as you', he says about the Epworth ghost,²¹ and, more seriously, 'you must allow me as I allow you'; 'I am the head as you are the heart'.²² More than once he says, 'We must agree in disagreeing', but he also declares, 'you are off the hooks!' 'Is there any reason', he asks, 'why you and I should have no further intercourse with one another?' And, six months later, 'I think that verily there is no need that you and I should be such strangers to each other. Surely we are old enough to be wiser.'²³ Each letter ends with 'my love to Sally'.

Charles indeed would appear at times to have been the severer critic of the two. 'In what respect', writes John, 'do you think it needful to break my power and reduce my authority within due bounds? I am quite ready to part with the whole or any part of it.'²⁴ He never wrote more strongly than when, in October 1753, an illness drove him for rest to Lewisham.²⁵ 'Did you consult me in your intending to winter in Bristol? Was my approbation ever enquired after in the matter? Had you previously consulted with me (which you did not) on this one point, yet one swallow makes no summer. O brother, pretend no longer to the thing that is not. . . . I would to God you would begin [to act in connexion with me] now or else talk no more as if you did.' Charles endorsed the letter with the words 'trying to bring me under his yoke'; to Charles it was John who was the enthusiast, so sadly rash and impulsive. Charles's restiveness appears as early as 1744, when he writes in his *Journal* of his brother, 'whose unhappiness it is still to set the wolf to keep the sheep',²⁶ and in the following year when he writes to John 'once more hear my raven's note, and despise it';²⁷ whether my apprehensions have ought divine in them I never presume to say', signing himself, in Greek, 'your prophet of evils'.²⁸ After his return to England, he writes: 'John's dropping my fatal letter I hope will convince him of what I never could, —his own great carelessness, and the sufferings that it brought upon him of his inimitable blindness. Surely all this will be sufficient to teach him a little of the wisdom of the serpent, of which he seems as utterly void as his dear friend Mrs H. is of the innocence of the dove.'²⁹ 'He was born for the benefit of knaves.'³⁰

Even when Charles's last few weeks on earth begin in the middle of February

1788, John can hardly believe that the end is approaching. Three of the last five letters are of the briefest. 'Consent', he begs Charles, 'to be cured.' 'You must go out *every* day or die', he says less than a fortnight before the end came. 'Be master in your own house', he writes. 'Do not die to save charges.' And he repeats the exhortation he had sent exactly three years before: 'If thou canst believe thou shalt see the glory of God.' 'Be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Adieu.'³¹ After this, he waited for further information, but in vain. The end came on 29th March; John heard of it from Bradburn on 4th April, at Macclesfield. He sent a letter to the widow at once and to his niece; and on the 12th to Peard Dickenson, who was in charge at City Road, he wrote, 'tis pity but the remains of my brother had been deposited with me'. But Charles, as he knew, had made up his mind.³²

At first blush these last five letters would seem but a dusty answer to all the questions raised by the long and intimate correspondence—so brief, so business-like, so obtuse. Where was there a sign of affection or warmth for the brother who was passing hence? Such indeed had been the tone of letter after letter. Often the brothers had written as if they were merely partners, and that not always on the best of terms. The truth is that their partnership rested on a deeper foundation than most would suspect. Ever since the Whitsuntide of 1738 they knew themselves to be bound together by as sacred a tie as any two men could know. From that time forward, save for certain brief and anxious periods, they had no secrets from one another. The letters show how they made their plans together, though each knew whose was the master-mind. John indeed appears to have been more open in this matter with Charles than Charles was with John. They shared their anxieties and their joys. Their mutual loyalty bade them speak 'home', as they would say, to each other. Their intimacy had no history. It was neither more nor less close at the beginning than at the end. There could never be the 'enforced ceremony' which appears (to quote Brutus's words to Cassius) 'when love begins to slacken and decay'.

*While we walk with God in light,
God our hearts doth still unite.*

And at the last, when John still spoke of things that lay on the surface, it was because he knew that true friendship, with the noble connotation that it bore for both, was grounded on the rock which nothing could move.

(To be concluded)

When no other note is given, the Roman figure indicates the number of the volume in Telford's edition of John Wesley's *Letters*, and the Arabic figure the pages. The references to John Wesley's *Journals* are to Curnock's Standard Edition, November 1909 to November 1916; the references to Charles Wesley's *Journals* are to the 1849 edition, 2 volumes, edited by Thomas Jackson; reprinted.

¹ I.44.

² I.5.

³ I.26.

⁴ I.197.

⁵ I.248.

⁶ I.322.

⁷ I.352f.

⁸ I.359f.

⁹ III.133.

¹⁰ V.16.

¹¹ V.314.

¹² V.88.

¹³ V.118.

¹⁴ V.314.

¹⁵ V.316, 345.

¹⁶ V.52.

¹⁷ VI.184.

¹⁸ VII.125.

¹⁹ VII.272.

²⁰ IV.199.

²¹ VI.82.

²² IV.322.

²³ IV. 245, 277.

²⁴ III.76.

²⁵ III.113.

²⁶ C.W.'s *Journal*, I.385.

²⁷ *ibid.*, I.403.

²⁸ *ibid.*, *vid. supra.*

²⁹ *ibid.*, I.57.

³⁰ *ibid.*, I.39.

³¹ VIII.36, 39, 41, 42, 45f.

³² VIII.52.

Recent Literature

EDITED BY R. NEWTON FLEW

Le Prophète Jérémie, by A. Aeschimann. (Delachaux et Niestlé, Sw. Frs. 9.50 and 12.50.)

Call a child Jeremy, and churchgoers either ask whether it is a family name, or look in pity on the infant destined to lament. The prophet's name does not seem suitable for the twentieth century. Now Roger Lloyd tells us of two Anglo-Catholic friends who had never heard of the Amalekites. This part of the general bewilderment about the Old Testament, which some relieve by becoming Marcionites and others by becoming agnostics. The relation of knowledge of the Old Testament to Christian faith and life in the Church needs re-examination, especially in this new day of Bible and Church. M. Aeschimann, in his contribution to a new series of attractive commentaries, writes from the experience of the ministry as well as of no mean scholarship. His purpose is to enable Jeremiah to speak, to describe the circumstance in which the Word flamed and hammered through him. This approach depends on a previous generation's analytical scholarship, to which M. Aeschimann acknowledges his debt, but he is not so much concerned to say whether such a pericope is from source A, B, or C, is messianic, or is to be fixed at this and no other date, as to start from the givenness of the text. It matters much more that the life of a man of God is a word from God; it matters that Jeremiah is liberated to speak, and the Word is spoken. From time to time, a very gentle reference to the ministry of Jesus enhances this achievement of a sense of unity. The presentation of the material is familiar to those who have used SCM Study Outlines or Epworth Preachers' Commentaries. A brief focussing introduction to a section is followed by detailed linguistic notes in smaller type, and then by exposition that drives one to the text of Scripture. There is no divorce between scholarship and the life of the Church, for M. Aeschimann fears that 'pure conjecture' that distracted many a student of the Old Testament. We find no lengthy discussion of the exact position of the face of the pot in Chapter 1. We know two things about it: it is boiling, and it is in the north, at a time when everyone is watching the seething Egyptians. The Word of God detaches Jeremiah from milieu and event. He is detached from his family who threaten to kill him for supporting Josiah's reformation. He is detached from the temple worship which results from the reformation, but which becomes the people's refuge from the judgement of the living God. He is detached from the disaster of the nation under Zedekiah, and even from his own plight, when he buys a field to signify his confidence in the Israel of God. He wonders whether he has been 'had' by God, but he remains a crater which must spit its fire. The great eschatology of Chapter 31 begins to make sense when it is seen as a Word given to a man of this detachment. The old Covenant has not quite contained him. The knowledge of God that has been his shall be shared and surpassed in the experience of all. God has yet more mercy. For us whose conditions resemble the jungle of Jordan, Jeremiah's life and the word he spoke are not a lullaby, but a life-giving jab.

C. HUGHES SMITH

The Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury. Volume II: *The Journal, 1794-1861*, edited by Elmer T. Clark (Editor-in-Chief), J. Manning Potts, Jacob S. Payton, (Published jointly by the Epworth Press, London and the Abingdon Press, Nashville, U.S.A. £7 10s. the set of three volumes.)

The second and final volume of Francis Asbury's Journal carries him and us from the beginning of 1794 to nearly the end of 1815, when he made his last entry in the

journal, and concludes with two brief accounts of the last few months of his life. The volume begins in South Carolina, and the journal ends in the same State; but vast journeyings over all the States from Maine to Georgia, through New York, Ohio and Kentucky, lie between. And the Editors maintain their carefulness and precision of comment from the beginning to the end. It should be possible after 1,588 large pages of a man's journal to form some idea of his personal character. But it is astonishingly difficult to do so in this case, in spite of Asbury's complete frankness about all the things he did and all the people he met. Perhaps the passages which, in the interest of peace in the Church (presumably), he asked his earliest editor to omit would have shed a brighter light on Asbury the man. As it is, Asbury's evangelism and church-building, his travels, and his conferences with his preachers, are all exposed to view. But the personality of the man who did all these things with such amazing success somehow eludes us. He does grant to us, however, a few glimpses of his character. For one thing, he shows himself in innumerable comments to be highly self-critical, even though the frequent allusions to his 'feeble' sermons seem to refer to his own physical feebleness rather than to anything in the sermons themselves. His entries suggest that he was almost continuously ill, often very ill indeed; in fact, some of his illnesses were so serious, and their effect in curtailing his itinerary so small, that it is even possible to suspect an element of hypochondria in his make-up—unless it was (as it may well have been) a superhuman fortitude that carried him on. He was certainly much afflicted with melancholy, and with profound doubt as to the success of his enterprises. We can gain an occasional insight, too, into his secondary aims; to the ever-present necessity of preaching the Gospel all other aims were secondary, and occupy a very small space in the Journal. But we can see them from time to time. It is sometimes doubted whether Asbury was personally convinced of the wrongness of slavery; he was simply loyal, it is suggested, to the Methodist 'party line'. But an occasional phrase, here and there, shows his deep sympathy with the slaves and his intention to fight for their liberty. Then, he leaves us in no doubt, in spite of the paucity of references to the issue, that he has no intention of ever allowing the Methodist Church in America to fall again under the control of the English Conference. As in his earlier years, matters external to the work of Methodism claim no attention from him at all; the war between America and Britain in 1812-14 brings forth simply a brief lament on the ruins of the Capitol and the White House, burned down by the English. But he did sometimes think about other personal matters than his health. At the age of forty-nine he sets down his considered reasons for remaining celibate. At first, he says, his travels and the War of Independence made marriage impossible. After he became superintendent bishop in America, he decided that he 'could hardly expect to find a woman with grace enough to enable her to live but one week out of the fifty-two with her husband: besides, what right has any man to take advantage of the affections of a woman, make her his wife, and by a voluntary absence subvert the whole order and economy of the marriage state?' It is a pity that neither John Wesley nor George Whitefield thought the matter out as carefully as that!

RUPERT E. DAVIES

The Preacher's Handbook, Number 6, edited by David N. Francis, M.A. (Epworth Press, 10. 6d.)

Though primarily for preachers, this little book should be welcomed by many general readers. Intelligent preaching is highly desirable and equally so is intelligent hearing, which is one of the ends that this volume will serve. It admirably sustains the high reputation of its five predecessors. The recently appointed Connexional Secretary, David N. Francis, writes a modest editorial in which he pays tribute to his predecessor, Greville P. Lewis and claims these handbooks as 'the fruit of his inspiration and

initiative'. The nine contributors deal competently with their subjects. There are two helpful and suggestive articles by Harold Roberts and W. Edwin Sangster on Preaching, the latter giving valuable advice on how to make preaching 'come alive'. R. G. Burnett draws attention to the *Epworth Commentaries* and shows what a valuable aid they may be to both preachers and Bible students who have neither the time nor the necessary training to benefit by more ambitious and recondite works. Anthony A. Barraclough writes on the life and character of David, showing how spiritual truths may be illustrated by the virtues and failings of Bible characters. G. A. E. Cornforth brings out the significance of some of the great words of the Epistles, such as *hope*, *patience*, etc., giving the reader insight into their wealth of meaning. W. D. Stacey considers the preacher's use of the miracles of our Lord. After declaring his belief that 'most of the miracle stories in the Gospels are true in broad outline', he discusses the meaning of 'Natural Law', the theology and purpose of miracles and suggests that the preacher may deal with each either as a 'simple incident', with a message for the witnesses that is still relevant, or it may be regarded as a 'timeless act', proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom and Mr W. D. Stacey illustrates these two methods by applying them both to the story of the leper in Mark 1₄₀₋₅. Under the capable guidance of Norman P. Goldhawk the reader surveys the course of Church History from the Reformation to the dawn of the nineteenth century and is steered through the cross currents of post-Reformation thought and controversy. To have accomplished this within the compass of twenty-four pages is a notable achievement. Cyril S. Rodd writes on the nature and value of the Psalter. As far as possible the preacher, guided by reputable commentaries, should acquaint himself with the general nature of the particular psalm and the time and circumstances in which it was written. He illustrates how this should be done by an analysis, along these lines, of twenty-seven of the first seventy-two psalms. Finally, J. Allan Fletcher gives an introduction to and a running commentary on 1 Peter which will richly repay the preacher's attention. It is a pleasure to commend this volume to preachers, hearers and general readers. W. L. DOUGHTY

Characters of the Bible, by Erik Routley and Trevor Huddleston. (Independent Press, 1s. 3d.)

The Independent Press does good service by publishing a number of the more outstanding religious broadcasts. This, the fifty-first in the series, contains the 'Lift up your Hearts' talks given by Dr Routley and Fr Huddleston when they were joint leaders of a mission to the University of Leeds. The former speaks about Ruth, Ahab and Jonah linking them, in sound biblical insight, with 1 Corinthians 13₁₋₆. The latter uses the Rich Young Ruler, the Elder Brother, the Woman with the issue of blood to illustrate different aspects of the love of God in Jesus Christ. The reader will be disappointed if he looks for evidence of the distinctive fame of either speaker, but here is sound and attractive exposition of Scripture. A. MARCUS WARD

Symbolism in the Bible and the Church, by Gilbert Cope. (S.C.M. Press, 30s.)

This is a useful book for the working minister. Easily written, with an underlying vein of humour, the author interprets the symbolism that is both apparent and hidden in the widest possible range of subjects that could be grouped under the title. His thesis is that the 'Christian Church is the guardian of a particular pattern which has proved the saving power to many; it now has the duty of examining this pattern and of expressing it in terms suitable to our own day'. Taken as a whole, this book has a special significance for the new generation of intelligent outsiders, who, knowing they stand in need of the Church, constantly ask why Church services, sacraments, theology or art should be in certain symbolic forms. This book, placed in the hands of the puzzled searcher after true worship, gives the reasons for the particular pattern of

Christianity as understood in the English speaking and northern European world. For this reason alone it deserves a place on the bookshelf of every minister with a congregation, but it will also help him to understand and know the reason for the complicated and enigmatic archaic beauty that is part of the religious heritage to which he has fallen heir. The material dealt with varies from the interpretation of the Bible's use of symbolism, to an assessment of the influence of sex and sexual imagery in religion; and from the scratched graffiti in the Catacombs to the need for modern Churches to satisfy through the use of symbolism the religious yearnings of the worshipping congregation. 'Scratch a Christian and you will find a wandering Jew', Mr Cope asserts. Following on this thought, the symbolism explained in the chapter on Archetypes of Creation is especially interesting. The treatment of the problem of suffering, from the story of Cain and Abel to the theme of the Communion Service, the sacrifice on the Cross, and the suffering of the Father in the Father-Son relationship are dealt with in detail. And an explanation of Paul's interpretations in the light of a Hellenistic philosophic and religious culture answers in a very adequate way queries posed by enquiring minds. Perhaps one of the more significant sections for Protestants is that dealing with the Great Mother, and types and symbols of the Virgin. Writing as a Protestant, Mr Cope helps Protestants to see the psychology underlying the cult of the Virgin Mary, and he also utters the warning that no matter what theological basis exists for special veneration, there is a psychological basis in all of our religious lives that cannot be ignored. While giving ample space to the history of symbolism in worship and architecture up to the present day, the assessment of modern Church architecture should be read by all who design, build, or subscribe to new Church building. The plea that 'clerical clients should try to think architecturally, and that the church architect should try to think liturgically', is sound common sense. And the argument for beauty rather than stark utility, backed by strong reasons for the psychological need of symbolism in worship, whether visual or liturgical, should be seriously considered by all who value the heritage they received and wish to pass it on enriched by their own contributions. The book is illustrated by a section of plates illustrating fine examples of Gothic ecclesiastical art, and an equally thought-provoking selection of modern ecclesiastical art.

ELIZABETH KISSACK

The Concept of Grace, by Philip S. Watson. (Epworth Press, 10s. 6d.)

Dr Watson has given us a book which should appeal to theologically-minded people, whether ministerial or lay. 'Grace' is a difficult term to define and almost inevitably loses something of its fragrance when the attempt is made. But the author avoids that. He begins with Paul's use of the word, as denoting the free bestowal of the favour and love of God, declared in Jesus Christ, for all who will accept it. Then, guided by one who knows his way through the intricacies of historical theology, we note the varied uses of the word by the Early Fathers, the Schoolmen, Luther and Calvin, coming at length into the clearer light of the Reformation. The chapter headings are arresting: Baptism as a Means of Grace: Justification as a Work of Grace: the Holy Spirit of Grace and, of special interest, the chapter on Dogma as an Affirmation of Grace. But this book is much more than a theological treatise on a particular theme. Its avoidance of severely technical terms, its clarity of style and its expression of the writer's most sacred convictions make it one for the devotional hour. The last chapter, on the Reality of Grace, is an inspiring climax. The contending voices of theologians through the ages are stilled and we are faced with truths that are vital for the Christian life. For many who read to the end of this refreshing little volume the words of the Benediction will acquire a deeper and enriched meaning: *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ!*

W. L. DOUGHTY

Studies on Baptism, by Members of the Union Committee of Churches of Christ, edited by James Gray. (Berean Press, 2s. 6d.)

The Churches of Christ are a denomination, small in numbers in this country, whose churches, like those of the Baptists, practise only believers' baptism; and the widespread thought which is being given to baptism today has compelled them to take note of what other Christian Churches are saying and to re-think their own position. A committee has done this and published a series of articles in the *Christian Advocate*, the substance of which is here reproduced. The authors regret the trend of recent scholarship, as in Professor Cullmann and Mr Flemington, and re-state the traditional case of the believer-baptists. They relate this to current ecumenical issues, and feel much misgiving about the proposed reunion scheme in North India, despite its attempts to meet their position. But this does not mean that they are complacent about the present practices of their own denomination. There are constructive references to the importance of the family, and they desire to see the more widespread adoption of services of thanksgiving for childbirth. They refer sympathetically to those who, having been brought up in Christian homes, grow by a gradual rather than a catastrophic process into the Church; and they justly observe that little has been done in their churches to re-interpret baptism in the light of such experiences. It might have been added that some in other traditions need to re-think the subject of conversion in a similar way. They feel the need for post-baptismal training, and make a wistful reference to the Methodist Class Meeting, though they feel that that is failing. The authors cannot be said in this small booklet to have answered or even stated every argument for infant baptism; but we who are committed to it should welcome such a sincere attempt to state the other view.

A. RAYMOND GEORGE

Charles Simeon: Essays written in Commemoration of his Bi-Centenary, edited by Michael Hennell and Arthur Pollard. (S.P.C.K., 21s.)

The editors have provided us with a book that will delight and possibly enlighten many students of religious life in England during the period 1780-1836. It is not so much a biography as a series of studies of aspects of Simeon's life and ministry, by seven members of the Evangelical Fellowship for Theological Literature, all of whom deal with their subject with sympathy and understanding. Soon after leaving Eton for Cambridge, Simeon experienced a remarkable spiritual conversion which determined all his future life. Until his death in 1836 he remained in Cambridge, becoming a Fellow of King's and incumbent of Trinity Church. As a result of close study of the New Testament he became the instrument, in the hands of God, for the re-creation of the Evangelical element in the Established Church. The story of his training of young men for that type of ministry, largely through his sermon classes, and 'conversation parties', is fascinating. Simeon was one of the dominating, determining characters of his day, as this book demonstrates. Though confined to Cambridge, his influence extended to remote parts of the earth, became more and more pronounced at home and continues to our own day. It was exercised, in part, through his purchases of advowsons, thereby ensuring the appointment of evangelical clergymen as these livings became vacant. The story of Charles Simeon should appeal strongly to Methodists, for he and John Wesley were, in most respects, kindred spirits, though we know of only two occasions on which they met. In these pages Simeon 'comes alive', with his faults which were few and his excellences which are many. It is a pleasure to recommend this book and to bespeak for it a wide circulation.

W. L. DOUGHTY

The Council of Florence, by Joseph Gill. (Cambridge University Press, £2 7s. 6d.)

The Council of Florence, reckoned by the Roman Church as having ecumenical status, was the climax of an effort in the early part of the fifteenth century to bring together the divided Eastern and Western Churches. The times would hardly appear at first sight to have been propitious. The papacy had only recently come through the difficulties of its 'Babylonish Captivity' and the Great Schism, and many who advocated reform in the West were putting their hopes in a general council. Indeed, when the Council of Ferrara-Florence began in 1438 Pope Eugenius IV still had on his hands the Council of Basle, which first met in 1431, and which was itself an expression of the conciliar movement for the reform of the Church. When Eugenius finally denounced the Council in 1436, it refused to obey his behest to move to Italy, and elected an anti-pope. It was under these conditions that the new Council opened at Ferrara in the beginning of 1438, with the intention of bringing together Latin and Greek delegates for the healing of the schism between East and West in the Church. The union which Rome desired was what Byzantium needed, for the Turks were nearing Constantinople. The distinguished array of Latin delegates met the Greeks, headed by the Greek Emperor John VIII and Joseph, Patriarch of Constantinople. In 1439 the council moved to Florence, where a deed of union was eventually signed. After the departure of the Greeks, union between the Western Church and several other Eastern Churches was recognized, and in 1443 the Council moved to Rome, where its sessions were finally concluded. But although the union between Rome and the Greeks was achieved at the Council, it did not long remain a reality. The Greek Church did not really approve of their representatives' action, and the capture of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453 brought the union to a tragic end. Such a complicated series of events affords plenty of scope for differences of interpretation. In the major section of this book, Fr Gill, Professor of the Pontifical Oriental Institute at Rome, gives a detailed description and analysis of the proceedings of the Council. He is admirably equipped to do so. He shared in the preparation of the series of new and critical editions of the documents, some previously unpublished, connected with the Council, and is thus able to base his account on fuller and more certain material than has hitherto been available to scholars. His main sources are the *Greek Acts* or *Practica*, which he believes to consist of the interweaving of three historical documents and of high historical value, the *Latin Acts*, and the *Memoirs* of the Greek delegate, Silvester Syropoulos, who signed the union, but like many others later professed hostility to it. Fr Gill devotes the middle chapters to an account of the theological discussions on the chief points at issue between the two sections of the Church—namely, the Filioque clause, the Procession of the Holy Spirit, Purgatory, and the Eucharistic Bread, but his main task is to set out and analyse historical causes and trends. Illuminating and interesting sidelights are given on the difficulties encountered by the delegates, such as the boredom, homesickness and wretched health suffered by many of the Greek representatives, the Pope's difficulty in paying for the hospitality of the enormous delegations, or the awkward problems of etiquette raised by the presence of so many great personages—the whole union project nearly foundered at the start because the Greek Patriarch discovered that he was expected to kiss the Pope's foot! It is as well to be reminded that such difficulties arise at the Christian summit, but the reader will wish to ponder more seriously the deeper issues raised, since they have something to say about our own endeavours after unity. Although Fr Gill writes with charity and understanding towards the Greeks, he will not allow that Pope Eugenius and the Latins deliberately created such a state of affairs as to reduce the Greeks to submission. He believes the learned among the Greek prelates, with the exception of Mark of Ephesus, gladly welcomed the conclusion that Latin and Greek saints taught the same doctrines, although differently expressed, about the relations

between the Persons of the Trinity, but that later in Constantinople their natural sentiments, under the charge of disloyalty to the faith of their fathers, got the upper hand. At all events the point emerges clearly that decisions taken at top-level discussions in the Church are never sufficient in themselves. Such conclusions were never popular with the rank and file in Constantinople, and Fr Gill admits that the Latins might have neutralized the anti-unionist propaganda if help had been despatched more speedily to Constantinople, and if a generous number of preachers had been sent to the East to explain and commend the union. Indeed, Fr Gill writes with frankness about the Western shortcomings, although he argues that it is incorrect to speak of papal 'oppressions'. In many ways the Pope was the prisoner of circumstances. So far as the Latin Church was concerned the importance of the Council of Florence was that it dealt the death-blow to conciliarism and so secured the victory for the popes and the survival of the traditional order of the Church. Fr Gill agrees that after the Council the need for reform in the Church was as great as ever, although he does not discuss the lines this ought to have followed. The unfortunate fact is that the popes who followed Eugenius and who inherited his position were not of his moral and religious stature. When reform did come it accordingly had to assume the radical and disruptive proportions of the Protestant revolt. NORMAN P. GOLDHAWK

Between God and History, by Richard K. Ullmann. (Allen & Unwin, 21s.)

Here is a thought-provoking account from the standpoint of a Quaker of man's predicament. The author examines our involvement in the lives of others, and shows that in all human action there is risk but that the necessity for action cannot be evaded. He attacks the philosophy that the end justifies the means, but also criticizes those who think it sufficient to choose good means without sufficient thought to the probable ends. There are acknowledged debts to Bonhoeffer as well as illuminating glimpses of Quaker thought and practice. There is discussion of such issues as personal and group morality and the validity of Christian pacifism in the face of radical evil. Although Ullmann eschews absolutism, he is satisfied that war is always wrong. He states: 'The justifiable accusation to be levelled against theologians who prefer war . . . is that they choose what so obviously is the greater evil.' There are some for whom it has not been so obvious that war is the greater evil! A recurring phrase which is fundamental to the thought of the book is 'the structure of being'. Thus it is stated, 'Jesus heard and did the will of God by being what he was meant to be, thus fulfilling the structure of being'. Again, Quakers are active at home and overseas 'to bring their fellow-men to a greater awareness of the structure of being. For this reason Friends are less concerned than other Christian or non-Christian missionaries to convert people to their own persuasion: they wish to turn a man to his true self, to the witness of God within, to what God meant him to be.' It is a pity that a phrase so important for the argument is assumed to be self-explanatory. The statement on p.107 that, 'even in fulfilling the will of God we might be driven to sinning in all responsibility', seems to reflect a too moralistic view of sin, and that of p.123, 'Jesus . . . in his very denial that he could do good', gravely distorts what the Gospels record. There are some errors which have escaped the proof-reader, such as 'Universalf Self' on p.48 and 'repsonsibilities' on p.161, while on p.130 'therefore not inappropriately' should presumably be 'not therefore inappropriately'. Nevertheless, the book remains interesting, valuable and profoundly disturbing.

VINCENT PARKIN

The Politics of English Dissent, by Raymond G. Cowherd. (Epworth Press, 21s.)

This book, sub-titled 'The Religious Aspects of Liberal and Humanitarian Reform Movements from 1815 to 1848', is a scholarly and closely documented study of an important and exciting period of English history. Dissenters have sometimes been depicted as narrow, other-worldly and pietistical, but their faith took them inevitably into politics, and at the beginning of the nineteenth century they were fortunate in having many causes to espouse—the removal of religious disabilities, the abolition of slavery, popular education and the reform of Parliament and local government. Their motives were religious; they were concerned primarily to remove the obstacles to the free expression of their own faith, but religion and politics were closely linked, for it was natural that men who wanted religious freedom should also desire political freedom. If this also was self-interest, it was one which was of ultimate benefit to the whole nation. As the author says: 'The triumph of religious liberty was, indeed, the first instalment of Parliamentary reform.' The Rev. Andrew Reed, in appealing to Dissenting preachers to support the Anti-Corn-Law League, said: 'We ask then that we shall be free—in labour, free; in trade, free; in speech, free; in religion, free: perfectly free.' To achieve their objectives, the Dissenters used all available methods. They conducted popular agitations, organized monster petitions to Parliament, held mass meetings, founded newspapers and started numerous societies as pressure groups to work for particular ends. They were not afraid to identify themselves with the Whig Party, and this alliance of Whigs and Dissenters continued until the spirit of reform had spent itself in the Whig Party; and then the Dissenters turned to the Radicals and helped to form a new Liberal organization. The author points out their limitations; they failed to understand the economic causes of institutions, and were too uncompromising for practical politics, yet their achievements were many, and we owe a great debt to their single-mindedness and moral fervour. Perhaps the author has concentrated too much on the middle-class aspect of the movement, with no reference to the influence of Dissent on the growth of trade unions or the more radical aspects of Dissent as seen in Primitive Methodism. Wesleyan Methodism is shown as the most conservative of the Dissenting sects, refusing to join in the agitation for the repeal of the Test Act, opposing a national and secular system of education and standing against Free Trade. Methodists have been accustomed to studies of the influence of Methodism on social movements. It is good to have a book like this in which the influence of Methodism is set within the wider context of Dissent.

LEONARD CONSTANTINE

The Last Pharisee: The Life and Times of Joshua ben Hanayah, by Joshua Podro. (Valentine Mitchell, 16s.)

Joshua ben Hanayah, the 'hero' of this fascinating biography by Joshua Podro, was born in the year A.D. 35. He died, more than ninety years later, on the eve of the disastrous Bar Kekeba rising and the final dissolution of the Jewish State in Palestine. In no sense a political leader, Rabbi Joshua, one of the truly great men in an age when Israel, in constant fear of Rome and torn with inner dissension, sorely needed the counsel he was so competent to give and her people so reluctant to accept. For this outstanding Pharisaic Rabbi was a pupil of Johanan ben Zakkai, the youngest and perhaps the worthiest of all the disciples of the great Hillel himself. The Hillelite motto, 'seek peace and pursue it', perfectly expressed Joshua's whole attitude to life. He had little use for the extremist in politics or religion. He steadfastly opposed every suggestion of rebellion against Rome. Religiously he criticized 'the foolishly pious, sly sinners, over-pious women and the plague of Pharisees', of whom he said that 'they were destroying the world'. This saying, one of his most frequently quoted, is often taken to imply that Joshua was attacking Pharisaism as such; but nothing, as the reader

will quickly discover, could be further from the truth. His attack was directed rather against the impostor and the hypocrite whose lives, whether under Pharisaism or any other religious system, serve only to underline the truth of the principle, *corruptio optimi pessima*. In a characteristically stimulating Foreword, Robert Graves tells how he persuaded the author, his friend and erstwhile collaborator, to make available for the general reader a study originally intended only for the Jewish reading public. For two reasons in particular we may be grateful to Robert Graves for this insistence. First, the book sheds a flood of light on a question of the interest and importance of which the majority of Christians are as yet hardly aware. It is the question as to how Judaism managed to survive not only the destruction of the Temple, but also the separation from itself of the Christian Church, and the centuries of persecution to which it was subjected on that account. And, secondly, as in the case of all truly great men, Joshua ben Hanayah belongs not to one age only, but to all time. Many readers of this first real biography of 'the last Pharisee', as Podro designates him, may be surprised to discover in his teaching authentic echoes of the great prophets of the eighth century B.C. They may be equally surprised to find how relevant much of his teaching is to the superficially different but fundamentally identical problems of the age in which we live. The book is, in fact, not merely a first-class essay in biography, but a very pertinent tract for the times.

W. W. SIMPSON

Hypnosis: Fact and Fiction, by F. L. Marcuse. (Pelican Books, 3s. 6d.)

In view of the renewed attention being paid to hypnotism, both in medical and other circles, this is a timely and wise book, which we hope will be widely read. The author is an American professor of psychology who has specialized in the subject, possessing clinical experience as well as purely academic knowledge. While from the point of view of British readers, one of the author's failings is that he is so largely coloured by the American scene, nevertheless what he has to say is of wide and universal interest. He is weakest on the historical side, but penetrating indeed on the current problems raised by this controversial subject. He tells us he asked over 1,000 people what were the questions about hypnosis they would like to see answered, and only five had no questions at all! The advantages and the dangers (and dangers there certainly are!) of hypnotic practice are carefully examined and fearlessly faced. While ignorance and prejudice (often medical) are discounted, Dr Marcuse exposes quite trenchantly the quackery and hallucinatory material at times associated with hypnotism. Yet he advances definite evidence of its beneficial use as an anaesthetic and its effectiveness in helping to restore emotional stability and the balance of mind and body. He makes a strong and entirely justifiable plea for tight control of practitioners. It is all to the good that most of these should be qualified medical men, though we doubt if it would be wise, as in psycho-analysis, entirely to restrict practice to doctors. But, certainly, all who use the art should be properly qualified and understand what they are doing, otherwise much harm may result. From the point of view of the Churches, there are some interesting and indeed illuminating points of view. The author thinks that Church Services that have a high content of ritual have an hypnotic atmosphere. A dim church interior, a cross on the altar or Communion table (a fixation point?), the rhythmic singing of hymns, and a congregation rising and kneeling together all put people along the hypnotic path. Certainly, mass revivals that appeal more to the emotions betray hypnotic characteristics. If this is so, then there is much to be said for the Protestant doctrine of the primacy of the sermon. Throughout, the person-to-person relationship is stressed, since all inductive methods depend upon it. A study of hypnotic induction is not without interest for the psychology of pastoral care. The author is concerned about the possibility that if appropriate pre-suggestions are made, a subject could be compelled to perform an act which is repugnant to him in

the ordinary way. This opens up another invasion of human personality and is akin to brain-washing. Here, again, are the dangers of too much psychology pointed out by a psychologist. Surely the necessity for adequate theological and moral teaching is indicated. Though it may seem to lie off the field of Christian thinking, this small book on a mysterious and recondite subject is well worth the attention of Christians, because of the signposts it erects for future thought in psychosomatic relationships.

JOHN CROWLESMITH

The Prehistory of Southern Africa, by Dr J. Desmond Clark. (Pelican Books, 6s.)

'Out of Africa', wrote an ancient Roman, 'comes always something new.' He would have been as correct to have said, 'always something old'. Dr Leakey, of Kenya, has recently claimed that his wife has found the skull of a youth who lived and hunted and fought in Tanganyika upward of 600,000 years ago. Dr Desmond Clark, in *The Prehistory of Southern Africa*, one of the latest Pelicans, has no hesitation in suggesting that the lower part of the continent was a probable cradle of the human race. Fragments of stones and bones have been unearthed from the deep floor layers of caves and from gravel beds which point to *Australopithecus*, the earliest of man, walking erect and learning to hurl stones to kill his prey, first emerging here. Culture after culture followed, of which relics in the shape of stone weapons and tools, lie spread throughout almost the whole of Southern Africa. Through epoch after epoch of extremely wet or very dry climatic conditions, mankind roved in families and in bands for hundreds of thousands of years, living on what they could find, and not resorting to agriculture until incoming Bantu tribes brought iron less than 2,000 years ago. With slow patience, every minute change possibly taking hundreds of years, he improved his shaping of his stones until those of the Later Stone Age are as well fashioned as those of Europe. To his skill in cracking flakes from rocks he within comparatively modern times added art. As with his tools so with his engravings and paintings on rock faces. These are to be found almost everywhere from Rhodesia to the Cape. The last of the Bushman artists died within recent years. Of the social and family arrangements of these early men Dr Clark has little to say, and almost nothing of their religious beliefs. Little of these can be gleaned from stones and vessels. The careful account of the stone ruins at Zimbabwe, and of other stone remainders elsewhere, suggests that, at any rate not many hundreds of years ago, a moderate civilization arose that was headed by divine kings ruling roughly-hewn kingdoms. Splendidly illustrated, the book makes fascinating reading for the layman as well as the expert in things archaeological and anthropological.

F. W. DODDS

Allegory and Event, by Dr R. P. C. Hanson. (S.C.M. Press, 35s.)

Since 1893, when Dr J. Armitage Robinson edited the *Philocalia*, a steady if rather thin stream of books on Origen has flowed in the English and Continental press. In the ecclesiastical world he has been for sixteen centuries a problem or a heretic. His predecessor, Clement of Alexandria, a man of similar enthusiasm, but far narrower vision, was popularly regarded as a saint till the middle of the eighteenth century. Origen never reached that eminence. But no patristic writer, even if we remember Jerome and Augustine, ever combined so comprehensive a power and so fierce a piety; a pioneer both as a textual critic, a commentator, a religious philosopher, a theologian, and an apologist, he did more for his own age and for the age that followed, than any other Christian author. In 202, when he was about fifteen years of age, his father was martyred; a year after he was a teacher of catechumens in Alexandria; a missionary in Arabia, known as the foremost Christian scholar in Antioch and Palestine, he was excommunicated before he was fifty-nine; and in 254, half a century after his father's murder, and nearly a century before Nicaea he was tortured and executed by Rome.

He was neither a bishop with the prestige of a diocese behind him, nor a monk with a peaceful abbey to which he could retire. He lived when the Emperors could launch their mysterious myrmidons against the Christians, and when one Christian to another was almost as hateful as a foe. Yet amidst unwearied and diversified labours for which an academic seclusion might seem scarcely sufficient, he cherished a yet deeper conviction, that the wisdom of the sage was necessary to the understanding of the raptures of the prophet. 'A Hellenist!' cried his detractors; but Hellenism, then as now, was a wide term. It might denote a student who gave special attention to the first chapter of St John, or one who walked in company with the wildest Gnostics. To Origen it meant that the real world was the world unseen; that God did not ride on the clouds nor smite Leviathan; that Christ was the Son, but eternally generated, and the Father, whose will could never be finally defied, would have all men to be saved at the last. Both Plato and Philo had gone to form his thought; he passed beyond the reach of both. But to affirm this was to deny the literal truth of statements that filled the Bible, from one end to the other. But then could the significance of the Bible as the word of God, every word of it, be preserved? Only as treated by type or by allegory. The two arts, distinct though related, had long been practised by students of Homer, or by Plato in his more scholarly way, by Philo, with his immense reverence for the law of Moses, and by less skilled fathers of the first two centuries. What was one to do with the stories of Rahab, of Elisha's bears, Ezekiel's sword song, the barren fig-tree, the two asses of Palm Sunday, and nearly the whole of the Apocalypse? And if the Christian hesitated, Celsus was quick with his repartees. Origen had his answer for everything: he was never at a loss, but what he gained by ingenuity he more than lost by caprice. Dr Hanson, whose industry is in its way as portentous as Origen's, has given us a fuller account of all this than we have yet possessed; but unfortunately in doing his best for the allegories, he has done the worst for Origen. Origen knew nothing of the history and development of religious thought. He had never heard of J and D and P; of Q and L. The preacher today knows all about them. But which of us, either by speech or pen, has not urged, 'This is a type which can matter little to us until we look beneath the surface'; or, 'This is an allegory, perhaps it never happened, but think of the moral of the fruit to be gathered from the tree'. The title of the book is not happily chosen. Dr Hanson is thinking not of allegory as a whole, but of Origen and his predecessors. The event does not concern the reader at all. Yet it seems rather unfair to ask Dr Hanson, with his 570 pages of text, his 5½ pages of bibliography, and his 18 pages of closely printed indexes to give us yet more. But it would at least have been useful to hear something of the system of Swedenborg. Allegory needs some sort of system, or it is merely one man's guess against another. But we can generally tell in what direction Origen's allegory is travelling. Dr Hanson has certainly given us a valuable chapter in the history of allegorization. Allegory, however, is a secondary matter, unless we are to think of a book like *The Pilgrim's Progress*, where the author and allegorizer are one. It may be questioned, too, whether even in these days, we have gained much from the study of types. For what can be learnt, Dr Hanson deserves the gratitude of us all.

W. F. LOFTHOUSE

From My New Shelf

BY R. NEWTON FLEW

The Promise of the Father, by John Huxtable (Independent Press, 6s.). This little book of 96 pages can be heartily recommended. It comes from the Principal of New College, London, and is meant not for the learned but for the wayfaring man. Its origin was a suggestion of a deacon while the author was the minister of a local church. 'Might we not have a few more sermons on the Holy Spirit?' This book is all the stronger in that it was given at a Ministers' Summer School of the Congregational Union. There are three Parts: I. The Basic Consideration, 'The Word and the Spirit' and 'In Christ'. Part II consists of sections on 'Faith—a gift of the Spirit', 'Led by the Spirit of God', 'Praying in the Spirit', 'Enabled by the Spirit', 'The Fruits of the Spirit'. Part III, 'The Fellowship of the Holy Spirit', is in four sections. The headings are (1) a demonstration of reconciliation; (2) re-created through worship; (3) working together; (4) some false alternatives. The book is timely and will help the readers to a better understanding of this article of the faith.

The Clue to Rome, Introduction to a City, by Reginald Kissack (The Epworth Press, 8s. 6d.). It is seldom that one can greet a book with unreserved praise which traverses so many departments of life and learning. The author gained high honours at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, and carried off a divinity degree at Richmond. He was one of his generation (and how few they were!) who has maintained his interest in the Latin authors. This book is a little masterpiece. It is no ordinary guide-book, though there are three and a half pages at the end which tell you where to begin. It is written for a modern tourist who can only spare four days. 'His aim', he says, 'is to explain Rome by directing the visitor to the places which best tell Rome's story.' This book is a Protestant book, and Rome cannot be explained except in terms of Christianity. Perhaps the Protestant may better understand the Catholic because of this book. The book is divided into six historical chapters; each period described by the dominant title: (1) The Idea of Rome Formalized; (2) . . . Evangelized; (3) . . . Christianized; (4) . . . Ecclesiasticized; (5) . . . Spiritualized; (6) . . . Nationalized. But when you have come to p.99 of this brilliantly-written book, there are three valuable pages of Epilogue. You ask, 'How is the Clue threaded through the streets by a pedestrian!' Buy and read this book, add an up-to-date map of Rome, and you will be fully equipped.

The School of Faith; The Catechisms of the Reformed Church, translated and edited with an Introduction by Thomas F. Torrance (James Clarke, 18s. 6d.). The Catechisms are divided into two classes, the Larger Catechisms, and the Shorter Catechisms. The Larger are: Calvin's Geneva (1541), the Heidelberg (1563), Craig's (1581), the New Catechism (1644), the Larger Catechism (1648). Part II: the Little Catechism (1556); Craig's Short (1592); a Catechism for Young Children (1641); The Shorter (1648); The Latin (1595). In preparing this volume Professor Torrance had four classes in mind: students of theology who require a handbook for study and discussion; ministers who require in simple form a doctrinal guide for their preaching and teaching; teachers of young people; and finally that growing multitude in every Church who seek to understand the doctrine and history of other communions in order that they may strive for the unity of the Church of Christ. There is an Introduction of 126 pages. When the Heidelberg Catechism, for instance, comes under review, there is a note by Dr Torrance that the exposition brings together both Lutheran and Reformed teaching. This catechism has exercised 'powerful mediating influence'. May every thinker and preacher in the Reformed tradition communicate the enthusiasm of Dr Torrance to others, and those others will catch the flame.

Josephus: The Jewish War: a New Translation, by G. A. Williamson (The Penguin Classics, 6s.). At last there is a competent translation of the indispensable Josephus. 'The sad fact is', says the translator, 'that the scholarly and most readable bilingual edition by St John Thackeray in the Loeb Classics . . . is already out of print, and even second-hand copies are unobtainable.' Now we all can read Josephus for ourselves at a very modest cost.

New and Living Way; An Explanation of the Epistle to the Hebrews, by Antony Snell (Faith Press, 18s.). This commentary by a member of the Society of the Sacred Mission is doubly welcome. It comes from Australia, and it makes kindly reference to the recent work of Dr Leon Morris, *The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross*. Father Snell repudiates gently but firmly 'the strange caprice' (as Denney called it) which fascinated Westcott into which we cannot enter now (see James Denney, *The Death of Christ*, pp.209-23). 'The Epistle to the Hebrews' is for many the least intelligible book in the New Testament. But Father Snell has for many years loved the Epistle greatly, and he knows which commentaries are the most helpful. The best, he is convinced, is E. Riggenbach. He mentions the recent (1952-3) French work of the Dominican, C. Spicq (which I have found a mine of learning), W. Manson (1951), and A. S. Peake (1902). He accepts the view of Tertullian that Barnabas was the author. The book is divided into two parts. Part I covers 40 pages: 'Opinion about the Epistle, authorship, destination, date, commentaries.' (2) Text and Literary form; (3) Aim of the Epistle; (4) Quotations from the Old Testament; (5) The Expansionism of S. Stephen; (6) Alexandrian thought in the Epistle; (7) Doctrine of the Person and the Work of Christ; (8) Doctrine of the Last Things; (9) Some important words; (10) Outline of the Epistle. These themes occupy fifty pages. Part II consists of the new translation and the commentary which accompanies it. These fill 107 pages; and then there is the Appendix, 'On the meaning of the word "blood" in Biblical thought'. Father Snell must be complimented on a clear and comprehensive work illuminating one of the most difficult books in the New Testament.

Facing Life and Death, a volume in commemoration of the late Leslie J. Tizard, edited by Harry Guntrip (G. Allen & Unwin, 16s.). There are thirteen sermons of the best quality—utterly honest, with illustrations from real life. There is a 'Biographical Introduction', and a most sympathetic Epilogue at the end of the book, both from the Editor's pen. The whole content of the sermons (pp.60-84) on God is worthy of careful study. Special attention was given to the conclusions of his sermons. Here the old adage comes into play—*ars celare artem*—'the art is to conceal the art'. Many theological students would benefit by a study of the way in which Leslie reaches his goal. No wonder he prepared carefully for his death. If any preacher was ready for it, it was he.

Methodism and the Trade Unions, by R. E. Wearmouth (Epworth Press, 6s.). The Wesley Historical Lecture at this year's Conference at the New Room, Broadmead, Bristol. This is a little book—small to look at, but great in purpose. There are four chapters. Labour leaders do not always relish being told in public (or even in private) of their indebtedness to the village chapel! When they do relish it, the gratitude is whole-hearted. There are four brief chapters. (1) The Condition of the Working Classes, from the beginning of the nineteenth century; (2) The purpose and Progress of the Trade Unions; (3) The Methodist Impact; (4) Conclusion. Five questions are asked, but deliberately are left unanswered: (a) What about the position of the individual? (b) What about the rights of the minority? (c) What about the exercise of political power by the Trade Unions? (d) What about the position of the Communists in the Trade Union fold? (e) What about the influence of the Methodists on the Trade Unions at the present time?

Saints Alive, by Bryan Green (Epworth Press, 5s.). The Methodist Lent Book for

1959 is worth more than one reading. The principles of good evangelism and Christian growth are honoured. The book is well planned, and on almost every page there is something lively, something fresh. The climax comes as it ought to come, in a chapter of pure gold, on 'A Life of Humility'. The first chapter is 'Where real Christianity begins'. Then follow (2) The Basis of Certainty; (3) A Life of Tension; (4) A Life of Daily Communion. Then the concept of Christ-likeness is analysed: (5) Efficiency; (6) Understanding; (7) Willingness to Suffer; (8) Gentleness and Creative Power. Then follow (9) A Life of Fellowship; (10) A Life of Discovery; (11) A Life of Freedom; (12) A Life of Moral Struggle; (13) A Life of Humility.

NOTABLE ARTICLES IN PERIODICALS

- The Expository Times*, July 1959 (T. and T. Clark, 1s. 9d.).
Jesus and the Servant by Morna D. Hooker—reviewed by Vincent Taylor.
 do., August.
 Apostolic Succession Again, by C. K. Barrett.
 Apostolic Succession, by W. R. Matthews, Dean of St. Paul's.
 do., September.
 The Epistles in the Class-room.
 do., October.
 Old Testament Commentaries, by various authors.
 A New Approach to the Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel, by Oscar Cullmann.
The Hibbert Journal, January 1959 (Allen & Unwin, 3s. 6d.).
 Aristotle's Religion, by J. K. Feibleman.
 do., July.
 The Origin of Religion, by S. G. T. Brandon.
 Renan and Matthew Arnold: Two Saddened Searchers, by Dr Joan N. Harding.
Science, Medicine and Morals, by Dr Raven; review.
Interpretation, July 1959.
 Recent Study of the Book of Amos, by James L. Mays.
 The Bible and Modern Religions, by E. G. Homrighousen.
Theology Today, January 1959 (Princeton, via Blackwell, Oxford, 5s.).
 Memory and the Gospel Tradition, by W. S. Taylor.
 do., July.
 Max Weber and the Christian Criticism of Life, by E. E. Best.
 That Strange Thing Money, by Otto A. Piper.
The International Review of Missions, October 1959 (O.U.P., 3s. 6d.).
 The Missionary Nature of the Church, by Austin Fulton.
 The Christian Approach to the Jew, by G. H. Stevens.
 Renewal of the Christian Mission to Islam, by R. P. Johnson.
Studies in Philology, July 1959 (North Carolina University Press, via C.U.P. \$1.50).
 John Donne's *Holy Sonnets* and the Anglican Doctrine of Contrition, by D. I. Peterson.
Journal of Politics, February 1959.
 Revolution in Hungary; Reflections by P. E. Zinner.
 Social Science Evidence and the School Segregation Cases.
 do., August 1959.
 Totalitarianism Power Structure and Russian Foreign Policy, by F. A. Hermens.
 Two Types of Recent Christian Political Thought, by D. L. Germino.
 Recent Restriction upon Negro Suffrage, by J. L. Bernd and L. M. Holland.
The Yale Review, Summer 1959.
 Coleridge: The Vulnerable, by I. A. Richards.
 The Changing Image of Catholicism in America, by Robert D. Cross.

Our Contributors

FRANK BAKER
B.A., B.D., PH.D.

Methodist Minister. Secretary of the Wesley Historical Society and of the International Methodist Historical Society. Member of the World Methodist Council. Author of several works on Methodist history and contributor to various journals.

KAY M. BAXTER
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Née fforde. Obtained Honours in Modern Languages at Newnham College, followed by a scholarship to R.A.D.A. Has experience of acting, teaching, writing, public speaking. Is Associate of Newnham College, Secretary of Cambridge University Women's Appointments Board, and Chairman of the Religious Drama Society's Council.

HERBERT J. COOK
M.A.

Left Handsworth College in 1936 with the B.A. degree of Birmingham University to serve in British Honduras for ten years. His first furlough allowed him to do further specialized study in Old Testament for the Master's degree. Since 1947 he has served in Jamaica, and is now at the Union Theological Seminary, Kingston.

BRIAN G. COOPER
B.A.

Baptist. Aged twenty-three. From 1954 to 1957 read Modern History at Oriel College, Oxford; 1956 gained Gladstone Memorial Scholarship, and B.A. (Second Class Honours) in 1957. Now working as a Research Student at St Antony's College, Oxford, for B.Litt. Since 1957 a contributor to the religious press, particularly the *British Weekly* and *Baptist Times*. Hoping to take up a post in Christian higher education in Pakistan during 1960.

CYRIL J. DAVEY
H.C.F.

Methodist Minister, Epsom. Entered Ministry, 1933. Garrison Chaplain, India, 1939-46. Member of General Missionary Committee for past 12 years. Editor Methodist Missionary Union *Bulletin*. Author of *The March of Methodism*, *The Methodist Story*, and over thirty other books and plays.

JOHN G. DAVIES
M.A., D.D.

Anglican Priest. Senior Lecturer in Theology at the University of Birmingham since 1948. Bampton Lecturer, 1958. Author of several books including *Daily Life in the Early Church*, *The Origin and Development of Early Christian Church Architecture*, *The Spirit, the Church and the Sacraments*, *He Ascended into Heaven*, etc.

DORA DIXON
B.A.

Educated at Ripon Girls' High School and Manchester University. Graduated in Social Administration in 1946. Worked as club-leader in Birmingham Settlement. Entered Wesley Deaconess Order, 1951. Sailed for Jamaica 1954 under Methodist Missionary Society. Now living and working in Jamaican villages.

R. NEWTON FLEW
M.A., D.D.

Moderator of Free Church Federal Council, 1945-6. President, Methodist Conference, 1946-7. Principal of Wesley House, Cambridge, 1937-55. Author and Editor of various important theological books.

JOHN W. L. HOAD
B.A.

Methodist Minister. A Barbadian, son of former West Indian cricketer. Diplomate of Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture, Trinidad. Studied at Cliff College; Wesley House, Cambridge; Göttingen and Basle Universities (as Finch scholar). Sometime at Belfast Central Mission; Superintendent of Essequibo Circuit, British Guiana.

W. F. LOFTHOUSE
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Methodist Minister. President of the Wesleyan Conference, 1929. Sometime tutor and later principal at Handsworth College. Author of works on Theology and Sociology.

J. DUNCAN PERCY
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Methodist Minister. Long a member of Mind Association and of the Royal Institute of Philosophy. Sometime lecturer at the United Theological College, Bangalore. Occasional contributor to the *Expository Times* and other journals.

PHILIP A. POTTER
M.TH.

Educated at Caenwood College, Jamaica, and Richmond College. Missionary Secretary of S.C.M. from 1948-50. Now serving as Youth Department Secretary, World Council of Churches.

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